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# SIX AGES OF EUROPEAN HISTORY

FROM A.D. 476 TO 1878

IN SIX VOLUMES

GENERAL EDITOR: A. H. JOHNSON, M.A.

FELLOW OF ALL SOULS' COLLEGE, OXFORD

VOLUME V

THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

1680-1789

FOR THE HIGHER FORMS OF SCHOOLS

SIX AGES OF EUROPEAN HISTORY

FROM A.D. 476 TO 1878

IN SIX VOLUMES

EDITED BY A. H. JOHNSON, M.A.  
Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford

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[Tenth Edition.]

# THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

1660-1789

BY

A. H. JOHNSON, M.A.

FELLOW OF ALL SOULS' COLLEGE

WITH ELEVEN MAPS,

SIXTH EDITION

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## PREFACE

THE period covered by this volume naturally falls into two sections.

During the first (1660-1715) the chief subjects of interest are the ascendancy of France in Western Europe, that of Sweden in the North, and that of the Habsburgs, against the Turks in the South-East.

During the second (1715-1789) we mark the decline of those three powers, and the rise of Prussia, Russia and England.

The whole age is one of intricate diplomacy, and of incessant wars, and yet it is one of great interest. The wars, no longer caused by religious dissensions, were waged, often ostensibly to maintain the balance of power, but really in the pursuit of national aims, to gain independence, for the acquisition of territory, or for the advancement of commercial and colonial interests. In every country except in England, where real power lay in the hands of a landowning and commercial aristocracy, these national interests were represented by absolute monarchs or their ministers.

Thus we are introduced to many striking personalities who with all their failings did great things for the country under their rule. As we draw to the end, however, we are forced to acknowledge that their day is over. The eighteenth century was to close with the outbreak of the French Revolution—a revolution in which France was the first to break violently with the past, and to help give to Europe these new ideas of government which have to a great extent triumphed in our own day.

Want of space has prevented any consecutive treatment of English History, and it would be well that some book on the subject should be studied alongside of the present volume.

Nor again has any attempt been made to deal with literature or art. To have done so at all adequately it would have been necessary to expand this volume beyond practicable proportions, while a mere enumeration of names would not have been of any value. An attempt, however, has been made in the Bibliography to draw attention to some of the more important writers, whose works might be read with great advantage.

A. H. J.

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1649.	Execution of Charles I. of England.
1650.	Death of William II., Stadholder of Holland.
1653.	End of the war of the Fronde.
1654.	Accession of Charles X. of Sweden.
1656.	Mahomed Kiuprili, Grand Vizier.
1658.	Leopold I. elected Emperor.
1659.	Treaty of the Pyrenees.
Feb. 18.	Death of Charles X. of Sweden—Accession of Charles XI.
1660, May.	Restoration of Charles II. of England.
	Treaty of Oliva.
June.	Treaty of Copenhagen.
July.	Treaty of Kardis.
1661, Mar.	Death of Mazarin—Louis XIV. rules directly.
	Achmet Kiuprili, Grand Vizier.
1664, Aug.	Eugène defeats the Turks at St. Gothard—Peace of Vasvár.
1665.	English war against Holland.
Jan.	Peace of Andrussovo.
1667, May.	The Devolution War.
July.	Peace of Breda between England and Holland.
Aug.	Fall of Clarendon—The Cabal Ministry.
1668, Jan.	The Triple Alliance—England, Holland, Sweden.
	Portugal regains her independence from Spain.
May.	Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.
1669, Sept.	Venice surrenders Crete to the Turks.

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1670, June.	The Secret Treaty of Dover.
1672, April.	The Dutch War.
July.	William of Orange made Stadholder.
Aug.	Murder of De Witt.
1674, May.	John Sobieski elected King of Poland.
July.	League of Leopold—Spain and Holland against France.
1675, Jan.	Great Elector defeats Charles XI. at Fehrbellin.
1676, Oct. 27.	Treaty of Zurawno.
Oct. 30.	Death of Achmet Kiuprili—Succeeded as Grand Vizier by Kara Mustapha.
1678, Aug. }	Peace of Nimeguen.
1679, Feb. }	
1679, Sept.	Accession of Charles XII. of Sweden.
Oct.	Chambres de Réunion.
1681, Mar.	The Exclusion Bill.
	Secret Treaty between Charles II. and Louis XIV.
1682.	Declaration of the Four Articles.
1683, Sept. 4.	Vienna relieved by John Sobieski.
Sept. 6.	Death of Colbert.
1684.	The Holy League against the Turk.
1685, Oct.	Revocation of Edict of Nantes.
1686, July.	League of Augsburg.
Aug. 12.	Victory at Mohacs over the Turks.
1687.	Venice seizes Athens and Corinth.
1688, April.	Great Elector succeeded by Frederick III. in Brandenburg.
Sept.	War of the League of Augsburg.
	Louis invades the Palatinate.
Oct.	William III. lands at Torbay.
Dec.	Flight of James II.
1689.	Peter the Great overthrows Sophia.
July 1.	James II. defeated at the battle of the Boyne.
1690, Aug. 18.	Duke of Savoy defeated at Staffarda.
1691, Aug. 8.	Turks defeated at Szalankemen.
1692, May 19.	French navy defeated at La Hogue.
June 5.	French take Namur.
Aug.	William III. defeated at Steinkirk.

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1698, July.	William III. defeated at Neerwinden.
1698, Aug. 4.	William III. retakes Namur.
1696, June 17.	Death of John Sobieski.
	Peter takes Asaf.
Aug. 29.	Treaty of Turin—Duke of Savoy joins France.
Sept. 11.	Eugène wins the battle of Zentha.
April.	Accession of Charles XII. of Sweden.
1697, Sept.-Oct.	Peace of Ryswick.
1698, Oct.	First Partition Treaty.
1699, Jan.	Peace of Carlowitz.
Nov.	League of Russia, Denmark and Poland against Charles XII. of Sweden.
1700, May.	Second Partition Treaty.
Nov. 1.	Death of Charles II. of Spain.
Nov. 30.	Charles XII. defeats Peter at Narva.
1701, Jan.	The Elector Frederick crowned King of Prussia.
Sept.	The Grand Alliance and the War of the Spanish Succession.
1702, Mar.	Death of William III.—Accession of Anne.
May.	Methuen Treaty—Portugal joins the Allies.
1703, Sept.	Victory of Villars at Höchstädt.
1704, Aug. 4.	The English take Gibraltar.
Aug. 13.	Marlborough's victory at Blenheim.
1705, May.	Emperor Leopold I. dies—Succeeded by Joseph I.
May 12.	Marlborough's victory at Ramillies.
1706, July.	Augustus of Poland deposed — Stanislas Leszcinski elected.
Sept. 7.	Eugène wins battle of Turin.
Sept. 14.	Treaty of Altranstadt.
1707, April.	Berwick defeats the English at Almanza.
1708, July 11.	Marlborough's victory at Oudenarde.
July 8.	Peter defeats Charles XII. at Pultawa—Augustus restored to the Polish throne.
1709, Sept. 4.	Marlborough's victory at Malplaquet.
1710, Dec. 10. } Dec. 20. }	Vendôme's victories at Brihuega and Villa Viciosa.
1711, April.	Death of the Emperor Joseph I.
July.	Treaty of the Pruth—Peter surrenders Asaf.
Dec.	Archduke Charles elected Emperor.
1712, July.	The English withdraw from the war.



## THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

1713, Feb.	Frederick I. of Prussia succeeded by Frederick William I.
April.	Peace of Utrecht—End of War of Spanish Succession.
Sept.	The Bull <i>Unigenitus</i> condemns the Jansenists.
1715, Sept. 1.	Death of Louis XIV.—Accession of Louis XV. Philip of Orleans Regent.
1717, Jan.	The Triple Alliance. The Mississippi Scheme.
1718, July.	Treaty of Passarowitz.
Aug.	Byng defeats the Spanish fleet off Cape Passaro. Treaty of London.
Dec.	Death of Charles XII. of Sweden.
1720, April.	Ministry of Walpole and Townshend.
1721, Aug.	Peace of Nystad between Sweden and Russia.
1723, Dec.	Death of Philip of Orleans—End of the Regency. Duke of Bourbon Minister in France.
1725, Feb.	Death of Peter the Great—Catherine I. succeeds.
April.	Treaty of Vienna.
Sept.	Treaty of Hanover.
1726, May.	Fall of Ripperda. Catherine of Russia succeeded by Peter II.
June.	Cardinal Fleury succeeds Duke of Bourbon as French Minister.
Oct.	Treaty of Wusterhausen.
1727, July.	George I. succeeded by George II. in England.
1729, Nov.	Treaty of Seville.
1730, Feb.	Peter II. of Russia succeeded by Anna.
1731, July.	Second Treaty of Vienna.
1733.	War of the Polish Succession.
Sept.	League of Turin.
Oct.	Frederick Augustus II. elected King of Poland.
Nov.	Treaty of the Escurial (First Family Compact).
1735, Oct.	Third Treaty of Vienna (confirmed 1738).
1739, Sept.	Treaty of Belgrade.
1740, May.	Frederick William I. of Prussia succeeded by Frederick the Great.
Oct.	Death of Emperor Charles VI. Anna of Russia succeeded by Ivan.

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1740, Dec.	Frederick the Great seizes Silesia.
1741, April.	Wins Battle of Mollwitz.
May.	Treaty of Nymphenburg.
June.	Treaty of Breslau—Opening of War of Austrian Succession.
Oct.	Treaty of Klein-Schnellendorf.
Dec.	Elizabeth of Russia succeeds Ivan.
1742, Jan.	Charles Albert of Bavaria elected Emperor as Charles VII.
Feb.	Walpole succeeded by Carteret in England.
May.	Prussian victory at Chotusitz.
July.	Treaty of Berlin—End of First Silesian War.
1743, Jan.	Death of Cardinal Fleury.
1743, June.	English victory at Dettingen.
Sept.	Treaty of Worms.
1744, May.	Union of Frankfurt—Beginning of Second Silesian War.
Oct.	Treaty of Fontainebleau (Second Family Compact).
1745, Jan.	Death of Emperor Charles VII.
April.	Treaty of Füssen.
May.	French victory at Fontenoy.
June.	Prussian victory at Hohenfriedberg.
Aug.	Francis of Lorraine, husband of Maria Theresa, elected Emperor.
Sept.	Prussian victory at Sohr.
Dec.	Prussian victory at Kesselsdorf.
1745, April.	Treaty of Dresden—End of Second Silesian War.
July.	Young Pretender defeated at Culloden.
Oct.	Philip V. of Spain succeeded by Ferdinand VI.
1747, May.	English victory off Ushant.
1748, April-Nov.	English victory at Cape Finisterre.
	Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle.
	End of War of the Austrian Succession.
1750.	Kaunitz Ambassador at Paris.
1750.	Kaunitz becomes Chancellor.
Sept.	Olive takes Arcot.
1750.	Recall of Dupleix.
1755, July.	Defeat of General Braddock near Fort Duquesne.

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1756, Jan.	Convention of Westminster between England and Prussia.
May.	England declares war against France. First Treaty of Versailles.
Aug.	Frederick occupies Saxony. Opening of Seven Years' War.
Oct.	Indecisive Battle of Lobositz.
1757, Jan.	The Imperial Diet declares war on Frederick. Elizabeth of Russia makes Convention of St. Petersburg with Austria.
May 2.	Second Treaty of Versailles. Frederick's victory at Prague.
June.	Frederick defeated at Kolin.
July.	Duke of Cumberland defeated at Hastenbeck.
Aug.	Russian victory at Gröss Jägerndorf.
Sept.	Convention of Kloster Seven.
Nov.	Frederick's victory at Rossbach.
1757, Dec.	Frederick's victory at Leuthen.
1758, Aug.	Frederick's victory at Zorndorf. Frederick defeated at Hochkirch.
1759, Aug.	Choiseul succeeds Bernis as French Foreign Minister. Charles III. succeeds Ferdinand in Spain. Frederick defeated at Künersdorf. English victory at Minden.
Sept.	Quebec taken by the English. Jesuits expelled from Portugal.
Nov.	Hawke's victory at Quiberon.
1760, Jan.	English victory at Wandewash.
Aug.	Frederick wins battle of Liegnitz.
Oct.	George II. succeeded by George III.
Nov.	Frederick wins battle of Torgau.
1761, Aug.	The Third Family Compact.
Oct.	Clatham succeeded by the Earl of Bute.
1762, Jan.	Elizabeth of Russia succeeded by Peter III.
July.	Peter III. deposed and murdered—Catherine II. succeeds as Tzarina.
1763, Feb.	Peace of Hubertsburg and Paris—End of Seven Years' War.

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1763, Oct.	Death of Augustus II. of Poland.
	Archduke Joseph elected King of the Romans.
1764, Sept.	Stanislas Poniatowski elected King of Poland.
1765, Aug.	Death of the Emperor Francis I.—Joseph II. Emperor.
Sept.	Joseph declared co-Regent with his mother, Maria Theresa.
1767.	Jesuits expelled from France.
1768, Oct.	War between Russia and Turkey.
1770, April.	Choiseul succeeded by the Duke d'Aiguillon.
1771.	Accession of Gustavus III. of Sweden.
July.	Jesuits abolished by Clement XIV.
1772, Aug.	Treaty of St. Petersburg—First Partition of Poland.
	The <i>Coup d'état</i> of Gustavus III.
1774, May.	Louis XVI. succeeds Louis XV.—Vergennes For- eign Minister—Turgot Comptroller-General.
July.	Treaty of Kutchuk Kainardji.
1775, May.	War of American Independence begins.
1776, May.	Turgot dismissed—Succeeded by Necker.
1777, Dec.	Death of Maximilian Joseph, Elector of Bavaria.
1778, Feb.	France joins the American Colonies against England.
1779, May.	Peace of Teschen.
1780, Nov.	Death of Maria Theresa—Joseph sole ruler in Austria.
1781, May.	Necker dismissed.
Oct.	Cornwallis capitulates at York Town.
1783, Jan.	Treaty of Versailles—England recognises the independence of the American Colonies and makes peace with France.
Dec.	Calonne appointed Comptroller-General.
1785, Nov.	Treaty of Fontainebleau. The League of the Princes.
1786, Aug.	Frederick the Great succeeded by Frederick William II.
1787, Feb.	Death of Vergennes. Joseph declares war against Turkey.
April.	Calonne dismissed.

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1787, Aug.	Turkey declares war against Russia.
1788, July.	The Triple Alliance—England, Prussia, Holland.
Aug.	Necker recalled.
1789, May.	Meeting of the States-General.
	Beginning of the French Revolution.
1790, Feb.	Death of Joseph II.—Leopold II. succeeds in Austria.
July.	Treaty of Reichenbach.
	Leopold II. elected Emperor.
1791, Aug.	Peace of Sistovo.
1792, Jan.	Peace of Jassy.
Mar.	Leopold II. succeeded by Francis II.
- April.	Opening of the War of the French Revolution.

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For a complete Bibliography of the Period, see the *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. v. and following volumes.

The best Historical Maps are :—

• Clarendon Press (ed. Poole). *N.B.*—The Maps may be bought separately.

Putzger: *Historischer School Atlas*.

Rothert: *Band III. V. A. Karten und Skizzen aus der allgemeinen geschichte* (1517-1789), Dusseldorf.

Wolderman: *Plastischer School Atlas*. Excellent for Physical Geography and cheap.

General Books concerning the whole Period :—

*Cambridge Modern History*.

Lavisse et Rambaud: *Histoire Générale*.

Sorel: *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. i. (an excellent sketch of the 18th century).

Chéruel: *Dictionnaire des institutions de la France* (a useful book of reference).

Wakeman: *The Ascendency of France*.

Hassall: *The Balance of Power*.

Jervis: *The Church of France*.

And for Students :—

Oman: *History of England*; or

Goldwin Smith: *Political History of England*; or

Fletcher: *English History*.



## XX THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

### CHAPTERS I-III

#### For Students :—

Voltaire : *Siècle de Louis XIV.*

Hassall : *Louis XIV.*

Macaulay : *History of England.*

Traill : *William III.* (English Statesmen Series).

Parkman : *Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV.*

Fénelon : *Télémaque.*

La Fontaine : *Fables.*

Racine : *Plays.*

Molière : *Plays.*

#### For Teachers :—

Lavisse : *Histoire de France*, vol. xiv. (This only goes as far as the Peace of Nimeguen, but other volumes will shortly be published.)

Clément : *Colbert.*

Lefèvre Pontalis : *Jean de Witt* (translated).

Sir J. Stephen : *Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography.* (The Portroyalists.)

Sainte-Beuve : *Port-Royal.*

Pascal : *Lettres Provinciales.*

Visct. St. Cyres : *Fénelon.*

Saint-Simon : *Mémoires.*

Torcy : *Mémoires.*

Cheruel : *Saint-Simon, historien de Louis XIV.*

Mignet : *Négociations relatives à la succession d'Espagne.*

Giraud : *Le traité d'Utrecht.*

Wyon : *The Reign of Queen Anne.*

#### Novels :—

Dumas : *La Tulipe Noir* and *Le Vicomte de Bragelonne.*

Conan Doyle : *The Refugees.*

J. B.-Burton : *Across the Salt Seas.*

### CHAPTER IV

#### For Students :—

Morfill : *The Story of Poland.*

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### For Teachers:—

- Carlyle: *Frederick the Great* (Introduction).  
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Tuttle: *History of Prussia*.  
Rambaud: *Histoire de la Russie* (translated by J. B. Lang).  
Geffroy: *Gustave III. et la Cour de France*.  
Schuyler: *Peter the Great*.

### Novels:—

- Sienkiewicz: *With Fire and Sword, The Deluge, and Pan Michel*.  
Imlay Taylor: *On the Red Staircase* and *An Imperial Lover*.  
Whishaw: *Near the Tsar* and *Near Death*.  
G. Hope: *The Triumph of Count Osterman*.  
Wymond Carey: *Monsieur Marten*.

## CHAPTER V

### For Students:—

- Malden: *Defeat of Turks before Vienna* (1683).  
Morfill: *The Story of Poland*.

### For Teachers:—

- Creasy: *The Ottoman Turks*.  
Leger: *Autriche Hongrie*.  
Arnoeth: *Prince Eugène von Savoyen*.  
La Jonquière: *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*.  
Finlay: *Greece under Foreign Dominion*.

### Novels:—

- Jokai: *Pretty Michel, Midst the Wild Carpathians, and The Slaves of the Padishah*.

## CHAPTER VI

### For Students:—

- Saint-Simon: *Mémoires*. (Parts to be selected).

## xxii THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

### For Teachers:—

Armstrong: *Elisabeth Farnese.*

Perkins: *The Regency.*

Carlyle: *Frederick the Great* (Introduction.)

Ranke

Tuttle

Ram baud

Geffroy

Arneth: *Prince Eugène von Savoyen.*

Lecky: *History of England.*

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### Novel:—

Dumas: *Le Chevalier d'Harmenthal.*

## CHAPTERS VII-IX

### For Students:—

Bright: *Maria Theresa* (Foreign Statesmen Series).

Macaulay: *Essays.*

Parkman: *Half Century of Conflict and Montcalm and Wolfe.*

Longman: *Frederick the Great and the Seven Years' War.*

### For Teachers:—

Carlyle: *Frederick the Great.*

Frederick the Great: *Histoire de mon temps and La Guerre de sept ans.*

Tuttle: *Frederick the Great.*

The Margravine of Baireuth: *Memoirs.*

Ram baud: *Histoire de la Russie* (translated by J. B. Lang).

Perkins: *The Reign of Louis XV.*

Aubertin: *L'esprit public au XVIIIème Siècle.*

Mahan: *Influence of Sea Power.*

Lecky: *History of England.*

Geffroy: *Gustave III. et la Cour de France.*

Montesquieu: *L'Esprit des Lois.*

Sorel: *La Question d'Orient au XVIIIème Siècle.*

### Novels:—

G. Sand: *Consuelo and The Countess of Rudolstadt.*

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For Students --

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For Teachers:--

Carlyle: *Frederick the Great.*

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Lecky: *History of England.*

### CHAPTER XI

For Students:—

Gardiner: *The French Revolution* (Introduction).

Rousseau: *Émile.*

Sorel: *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. i., chap. xi

For Teachers:—

Chérest: *La Chute de l'ancien Régime.*

De Tocqueville: *L'ancien Régime* (translated. France before the Revolution).

Say: *Turgot.*

Morley: *Voltaire and Rousseau.*

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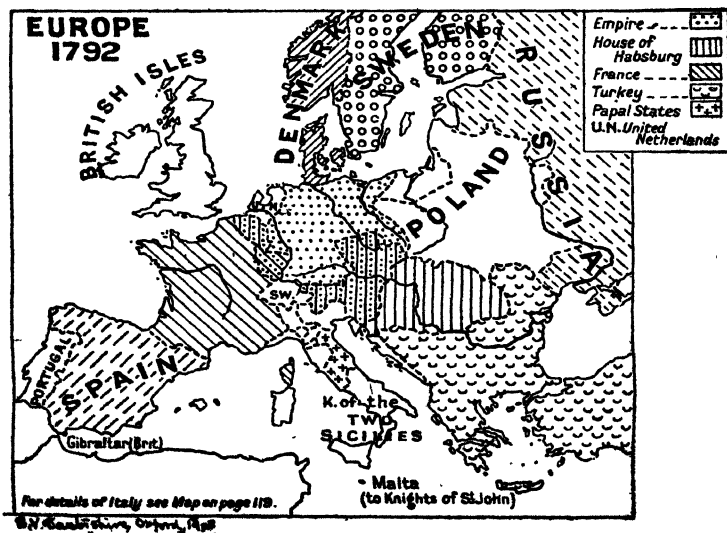
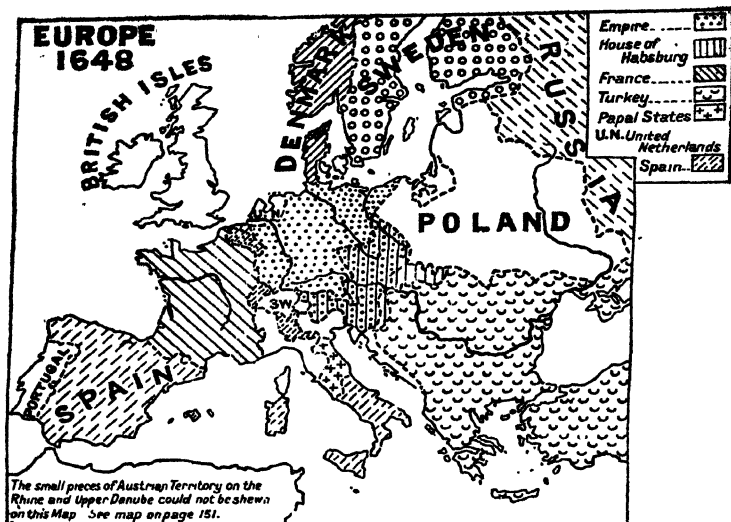
Rocquain: *L'esprit révolutionnaire avant la Révolution.*

Novel:—

M. E. Coleridge: *The King with Two Faces.*



**THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED  
DESPOT**



# THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

1660-1789

## CHAPTER I

### LOUIS XIV. AND THE REFORMS OF COLBERT

**W**HEN on the death of Mazarin in March, 1661, Position of France in 1661 Louis XIV. assumed the direct government of France, her predominance in Western Europe was assured.

By the Peace of Westphalia (1648) and the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659), she had acquired possessions of the greatest value. By the former, her old claims to the three Bishoprics of Lorraine, Metz, Toul and Verdun, were definitely acknowledged and she was allowed to garrison Philipsburg, on the right bank of the Rhine. In Alsace she gained the town of Breisach on the left bank of the Rhine, the landgraviate of Upper and Lower Alsace, and the prefecture of ten Imperial cities which lay scattered about, always excepting the Bishoprics of Basle, and of Strasburg, and the Imperial rights over Lower Alsace. In Italy she kept Pignerole.

At the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659) she regained from Spain Rousillon and Cerdagne, which completed



#### 4 THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

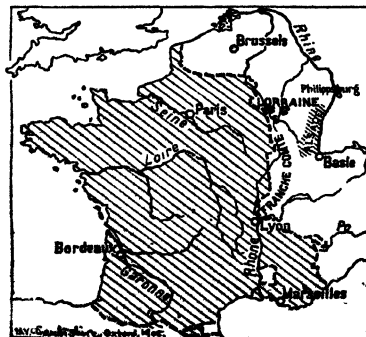
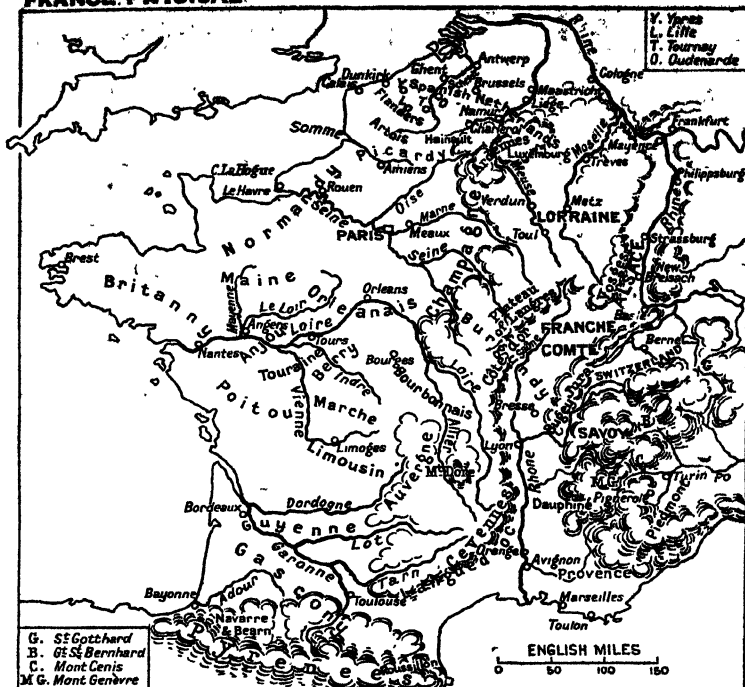
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The importance of these acquisitions will be best understood by reference to the map opposite. Those in Artois, Flanders, Hainault and Luxemburg gave her strong places, which could be made the basis of future advance towards the Spanish Netherlands. Those in Lorraine practically placed that Duchy in her hands, as well as the control of the great roads to the Rhine and the passage over the Meuse and Moselle rivers. Those in Alsace advanced her boundary to the Rhine itself. Finally, Pignerole commanded the important pass of St. Genèvre from Dauphiné over the Alps into Piedmont, and brought her within striking distance of Milan.

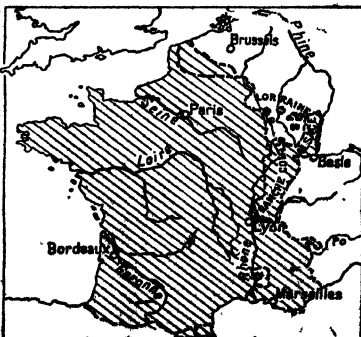
Nor was this all. Of the territories which lay thus exposed to her attack, those parts of Alsace and Lorraine which France had not acquired belonged to the Empire, then under the rule of Leopold I., the head of the Austrian branch of the House of Habsburg, while the Spanish Netherlands, Franche Comté and Milan were in the hands of the Spanish line of the same house, represented by Philip IV. of Spain; yet of these representatives of the House of Habsburg neither was in a position to effectually defend them.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 23, 50.

# FRANCE: PHYSICAL.



At accession of Louis XIV



At death of Louis XIV

#### 4 THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

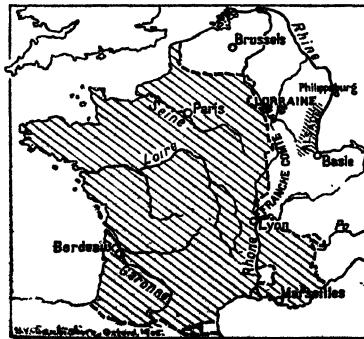
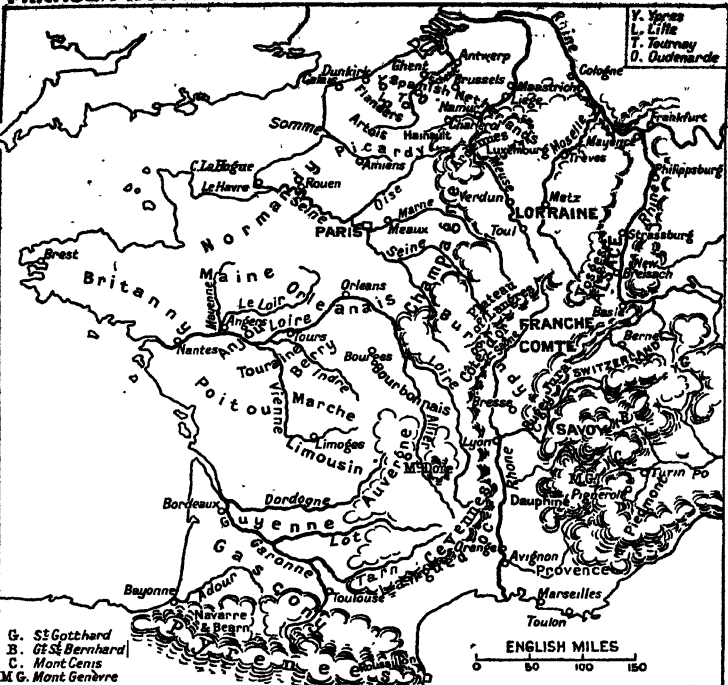
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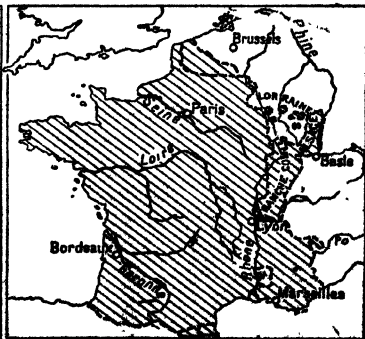
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## FRANCE: PHYSICAL



### At accession of Louis XIV



### At death of Louis XIV

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Condition  
of the  
Empire

As a result of the Thirty Years' War the Empire had slipped from the Emperor's grasp. The Electors and the greater Princes, though still nominally subject to the Emperor and the Imperial Diet, had established their virtual independence. The Emperor, despairing of the Empire, had ceased to represent German interests, and was occupied with the consolidation of his hereditary dominions in the South-East and in arresting the advance of the Turks in Hungary.

Thus Germany, which had never been a united kingdom, had now become a loose confederation of states large and small, each too much intent on the advancement of its own interests to unite against France, yet too weak to resist alone. The want of cohesion had been further aggravated by the conclusion of the League of the Rhine (1658). This was composed of the three ecclesiastical electors, the Archbishops of Mayence, Trèves and Cologne, who were Catholic; of the Protestant Duke of Brunswick; the Landgrave of Hesse, and the King of Sweden as Duke of Bremen and Verden, and was placed under the protection of France.

Although it is true that the League was formed rather against the Habsburgs in Austria than against the Empire, yet it gave France the pretext for constant interference in German affairs, and made her influence in Germany almost as great as that of the Emperor himself.

and Spain

Meanwhile Spain was in rapid decay, the country ruined by religious bigotry and commercial exclusive-

## LOUIS XIV. AND THE REFORMS OF COLBERT 7

ness, and the ruling family effete. That the magnificent position thus held by France would tempt her to further aggression can scarce cause surprise, especially when we remember that her destinies were in the hands of an ambitious king in his twenty-third year.

Louis XIV. was one of the ablest men of his generation. To an excellent memory and a remarkable knowledge of the conditions of Europe, he added an immense capacity for work, great fertility of resource, diplomatic gifts of a high order, and unwearied patience in the pursuit of his policy. He was served at the opening of his reign by Colbert, a master of finance; by Lionne, an acute diplomatist; by Turenne, probably the greatest strategist of his age; by Condé, a brilliant leader of cavalry; and by Vauban, of whom it is said that he never lost a fortress which he defended, or besieged one without taking it.

In no country of Europe was the national pride so high, while the troubles through which she had lately passed during the days of the Fronde had strengthened the conviction, long entertained in France, that her greatness was identified with that of an absolute monarch.

No one, says St. Simon, the great biographer of the time, spoke any longer of the interest or the honour of the State but of the King. Of these sentiments, the young King was the very incarnation. If he never actually used the expression, "I am the State," it at least represents his views. Looking on

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himself as the divinely appointed leader and master of his country, he was fully convinced that she was designed to continue in her career of conquest; to acquire the Rhine frontier which Frenchmen have ever, though wrongly, considered to be their natural boundary, and finally to make herself the arbiter of the destinies of Western Europe at least.

Nevertheless even Louis himself recognised that before such a course was possible, it was necessary to set his own kingdom in order. In the very midst of her war with Spain, France had been torn by the "Wars of the Fronde," that strange travesty of the Great Rebellion in England which, begun by the Judicial Court of France, called the "Parlement" of Paris, had been made use of by the Princes of the Blood, the nobles, and all those who had resented the centralising policy of Richelieu and who disliked more especially to see the government in the hands of Cardinal Mazarin, a man of no birth and a foreigner.

The rebellion had indeed been quelled, but it was imperative that the possibility of a renewal of the troubles should be removed, that the work of Richelieu should be completed, and that some order at least should be restored in the political and financial condition of the country.

Internal  
conditions

In dealing with the political constitution of France, it is necessary to remember the history of her growth. Based originally on the royal domain, a small district surrounding the cities of Paris, Orleans, and

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Bourges, the government had never entirely lost its character. The royal domain had indeed been vastly increased by the gradual absorption of the great fiefs, and by conquests from the foreigner. But the Kings of France had never been able to effectually consolidate their dominions, or to organise a strong united kingdom, as had been the good fortune of the Norman and Angevin Kings of England. They had therefore perforce been contented with assuming a general control, and with establishing certain central bodies, more especially ~~that~~ the Royal Council, while they left many of the old institutions standing. Hence the government of France was a chaos of old survivals of the past, jostling each other and the central authority, without vitality enough to be of any use, yet able to obstruct the Crown at every turn. A representative assembly of the whole country had indeed once existed in the States-general, composed of deputies of the clergy, the nobles, and the third estate. Its attempts, however, to follow the steps of the English Parliament and to control the Crown had been resented, and it had never been called since the year 1614.

In some fourteen of the Provinces<sup>1</sup> there still existed provincial estates, but with a few exceptions, these had lost all power, except that of laying their grievances before the King without any means of securing redress.

In the absence of any effective representative

<sup>1</sup> The most important were Brittany, the Boulonnais, Artois, Burgundy, Provence, and Languedoc.



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assembly, the provincial "Parlements"<sup>1</sup> and especially the "Parlement" of Paris attempted to check the royal despotism. Formed of judges and of lawyers, their assumption of political power was based, at least in the case of the "Parlement" of Paris, on a claim to register or to refuse to register the royal edicts.

Not only was the ground of its pretension a narrow one, but being a body practically hereditary, it was in no way fitted to represent the nation; its members had finally discredited themselves by their action at the time of the Fronde, and it was now once more confined to its judicial functions. For the rest, the justice of the country was in the hands of numerous authorities, royal "prevôts" something like our justices of assize; noblemen with their manorial jurisdiction; smaller judges in the villages; all struggling with one another over the limits of their several jurisdictions, and in the case of the two last, dispensing their so-called justice ignorantly and with much petty tyranny.

Financial  
system

But the real cancer of the kingdom lay in its financial system.

This violated every acknowledged canon of taxation. It fell very unequally on the various classes, it checked trade, and it was collected in such a manner that the Government was defrauded at every turn, and received less than half the sums levied on the taxpayer.

The direct taxation consisted mainly of the "taille"

<sup>1</sup>There were eight: Toulouse, Grenoble, Bordeaux, Dijon, Rouen, Aix, Pau, Rennes.

and the "gabelle". The "taille" was a tax on landed property in some provinces and on land and personal property in others. The nobles, the clergy, the judicial and official classes ("noblesse de la robe"), and many others were exempt, so that the tax fell almost entirely on the poor. The "gabelle" was the produce of the Government monopoly from the sale of salt. Each household was obliged to buy a certain amount according to its numbers, and to use it only for table purposes. Thus it was a kind of capitation tax, and, as the price was high, it fell especially severely on the less wealthy. The indirect taxation, or the customs, were not only exceedingly numerous and heavy, but were exacted at the boundaries of every province, so that it has been computed that a tun of wine paid its own value in dues before it reached Paris. It was, however, in the collection of these taxes that abuses were the most flagrant.

Owing to the numerous wars and internal struggles in which France had been engaged throughout her history, not only were the taxes very heavy, but they had in almost every case been farmed out to individuals or companies. These paid a sum down to the Exchequer, and recouped themselves by the taxes which they thereby acquired the right to levy, and they often obtained their lease on fraudulent terms through the influence of royal mistresses or other court favourites. In this way the royal exchequer had acquired the necessary ready money, but at a loss of revenue. Meanwhile the farmers of the taxes had become masters of the situation, and exercised

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their rights with severity and with cruelty. They often sub-let to others, and hence there was an army of sordid tax-gatherers, who lived on the unfortunate taxpayer. Moreover, State loans had been raised at usurious interest which were assigned on some tax. France was, in-fact, much in the condition of a bankrupt State of to-day which has forestalled its receipts and handed over its future revenues to a number of financiers.

Offices  
hereditary

To this we should add another feature peculiar to French government. Almost every office, high or low, judicial, financial, or administrative, had become practically hereditary, and was bought and sold something after the manner of our old system of purchase in the army. Thus the whole administration was clogged by an organised association of hereditary administrators whose very livelihood depended on preserving the effete institutions and who stoutly resisted all reform.

Social  
conditions

Nor were the social conditions any better. The Crown, afraid of giving the nobles any political power, had studiously deprived them of all office except that of occupying the nominal post of governors of the provinces, and of serving in the army and in the higher positions in the Church, which were almost exclusively reserved to them, and also of filling offices round the court. They were thus condemned to a life of idleness, the most evil fate which can befall an aristocracy. They spent their time in pleasure and in gambling, thereby impoverishing themselves so much that

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they often had to sell their estates; they became absentees, and were known to their dependants only through their stewards, who levied their feudal and other dues; they crowded round the King in hopes of picking up some ceremonial post from royal favour.

The middle classes monopolised the judicial and administrative departments, which, as said above, were practically hereditary in their families, and were tempted by the lucrative character of this work from devoting themselves to trade.

The lower classes were ground down by taxation and by the numerous dues they owed to their lords, and, in the case of the artisans, were checked in pursuing their industry by numerous guilds which were daily becoming more close.

Finally, the Church was divided between the nobles, who held all the higher and well-paid preferments, and the "curés," or parish priests, drawn from the lower classes and scantily endowed.

To reform these numerous and deep-seated abuses The reforms of Colbert, 1661-1682 was indeed an Herculean task. But in his financial minister, Colbert, Louis XIV. had at least a man who did not shrink from the attempt. The views of this most remarkable man were a strange mixture, some right, some wrong. He started with the absurd proposition that the trade of a country can only be increased at the expense of others; whereas we have no difficulty in seeing that, if every one made twice as much as before, the trade of the world would be doubled, and every one would possess twice as

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much. Thus if the tailors and agricultural labourers were to double their respective output of clothes and wheat, each tailor would be able to exchange his extra clothes for more food, and each labourer exchange his extra wheat for more clothes.

That this theory, though unsound, led Colbert to some valuable conclusions is true. In the first place, it taught the importance of home industry, for by it alone could France make for herself what till then she had bought abroad. Therefore, said he, in a well regulated State there should be no idle folk. *Nobles must be forced to work. Monks must be done away with. The number of the lawyers, the Government officials, and those who lived by "farming" and collecting the revenue must be reduced.* Secondly, it taught him the evil of the provincial custom duties, and made him wish to introduce free trade within the country: to reduce the direct taxes, to raise them by more equitable methods, and to put an end to the frauds which the present system caused. Once more, he urged upon the King the necessity of improving the roads and canals, of establishing a uniform scale of weights and measures, and thus in every way increasing industry and trade. Finally, he hoped to substitute for the existing administration, with its antiquated survivals, its inefficiency and its peculations, an uniform and centralised system under the Crown itself. The King should preside over the Councils of Finance and Commerce, supervise the administration of justice, inform himself by personal inspection of the

## LOUIS XIV. AND THE REFORMS OF COLBERT 15

needs of his kingdom, carefully balance his expenses and his receipts, and thus become the wealthy, powerful King of an opulent people, and eventually the master of Europe.

Louis was not unwilling to listen to his advice, and opened his reign with vigorous measures. Fouquet, the head intendant of finance, a man who, by his fraudulent methods, had amassed a fortune greater than that of the Crown itself, was seized just after he had sumptuously entertained his master at his more than royal château at Vaux le Vicomte, near Melun; tried with scant justice by a special tribunal, and condemned by Louis himself to perpetual imprisonment, although the court had only judged him worthy of exile. The farmers of the taxes were next attacked; some of them were forced to surrender their leases to the Crown; and those who had lent money to Government had to content themselves with a lower rate of interest or were paid off at a low price. The alienations of the royal domain were to some extent revoked. The customs at the frontiers of the sixteen Provinces in the centre were done away with, and free trade established within those limits. Industries were fostered and measures taken to teach new and better methods of manufacture. Many roads were improved and canals made.

The colonies of France, more especially that of Canada, were developed; emigration was stimulated, and the soldiers who served in the colonies were forced to marry. The colonial and Indian trade was placed in the hands of chartered companies, and

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colonial affairs put under the supervision of a Council of Commerce, in which the manufacturing towns of France were represented. Nor were the interests of science, of literature, or of art neglected. Academies of science, painting and sculpture were founded, and the great writers Molière, Corneille and Racine were awarded pensions.

The same energy was also shown in dealing with the other departments of administration. An attempt was made to fix the price of the purchase of offices and the age at which office might be taken. The independence of the Provincial Estates was attacked. But far the most important and far-reaching of the reforms is to be found in the development of the functions of the "Intendant". This official, whose origin is to be traced to the days of Richelieu, had in the first instance been appointed to supervise the local financial system, but his powers had been extended, and the system was now finally established. Unlike the other officials, his office had never become hereditary or the subject of sale. He represented the King himself in each Province, and kept a general control of the local administration of police, of justice and of finance, and reported to the Comptroller-General, now Colbert himself.

Colbert's  
reforms  
not carried  
out com-  
pletely.  
The result

Had Colbert's views been carried out to their logical conclusion an effective, though perhaps despotic, system of administration might have been established. But the King was not prepared for such a drastic reform. Accordingly the governors of the Provinces, the Provincial Estates, the local

"Parlements" and other courts, the numerous agents, financial and other, still survived. Henceforth we note the presence of two conflicting authorities: the ancient, effete survivals of the past, and the new, that of the "intendants," who gradually indeed absorbed most of the power, and yet were constantly opposed. Hence perpetual friction, which checked efficiency, and bred discontent. This too was the final outcome of the other attempts at reform. The evils were too deep-seated, and too many interests and privileges were assailed, too many customs interfered with, too many prejudices shocked.

The very agents of reform were bribed. Colbert himself doubted whether the abuses could be removed in one lifetime, although he reminded Louis that he was still young. Moreover, the King himself was soon weary of the struggle. The discontent it caused was becoming serious; the initial loss to the exchequer would be great, the King himself imperatively needed money and neglected Colbert's earnest adjuration that he should carefully balance his expenses and his receipts. Accordingly the hope of radical and thorough reform was abandoned, and the King contented himself with acting much as the "Intendants" did. He left the old institutions with all their evils, intervening personally, violently, partially and often unjustly, when his attention was directed to any flagrant abuse. By this means his pride was flattered, since he could look upon the work, such as it was, as all his own. But his country suffered. The institutions, instead of becoming simple, centralised



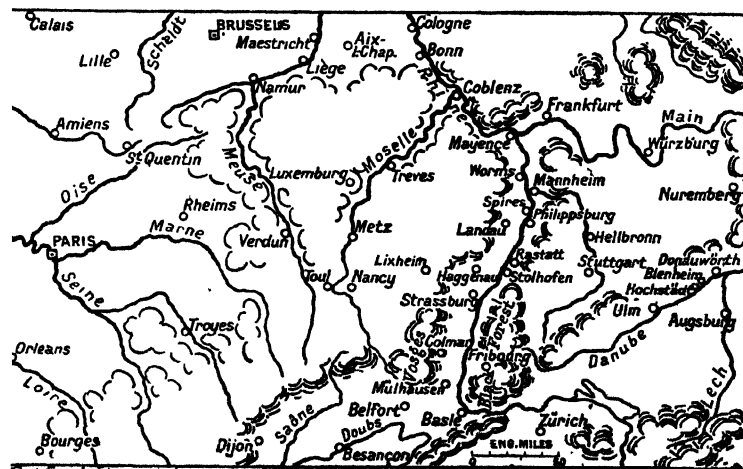
## 18 THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

and efficient, fell more hopelessly into confusion. The Government became more arbitrary and more personal, and reform grew daily a more difficult task. The great savings which Colbert had effected were soon dissipated by war, and the danger of national bankruptcy daily increased. There is truth, therefore, in the saying that if Louis brought France to the height of her glory, he did it by methods which prepared her ruin.

For this Colbert himself was in part responsible. His economical views, as said above, were wholly wrong and bore evil fruit in many ways. It is perhaps unfair to accuse Colbert of disregarding agriculture, or to blame his policy of forbidding the export of wheat except when the harvest was plentiful, for France was often exposed to famine, and no one at that time realised that the best remedy was to be found in free trade, even if that had been practicable. Moreover, it was the refusal, contrary to Colbert's wish, of each province to allow export to any other province even in good years which was the fatal step, for thereby the market became so limited that it hardly paid to grow corn at all, and the farmers positively dreaded a good year. It may also be argued that his other views were only those of his day; that his protective measures had a political aim and were designed to increase the national independence and solidarity of France; and that the world is not even yet convinced in favour of free trade. But at least it may be said that no one would now agree with his main proposition given above.

(p. 13), nor approve of his conclusion that the great aim of a country should be to destroy the manufactures of another country. For how could this be done except by imposing prohibitive tariffs on the goods of other countries, a policy which must lead to retaliation on their part? Hence, a war of tariffs, which would probably lead to war itself. Colbert declared that this was the only policy to be adopted towards Holland, then the chief industrial rival of France. "Holland," he said, "must either be forced to accept our terms or be conquered." Thus Colbert urged the King on that course of war in which he was only too eager to engage, and which was finally to ruin all efforts at reform.

This map illustrates the Low Countries and surrounding regions, including parts of the Netherlands, Belgium, and France. Major cities and towns are marked, such as Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, Utrecht, Antwerp, Brussels, and Cologne. The map also shows the English Channel, the North Sea, and the English coast. A scale bar in English miles is provided at the bottom right.



## CHAPTER II

### THE WAR OF DEVOLUTION, DUTCH WAR, AND WAR OF THE LEAGUE OF AUGSBURG

HAD a cautious statesman been on the throne of France, he would have realised that the country really needed peace, and that the royal energies should be concentrated on completing the financial and other reforms which had been only half accomplished.

Meanwhile attention might have been directed to colonial expansion, for in this direction France had a great opportunity.<sup>1</sup> Spain had enough in Mexico and in South America to more than occupy her failing powers; the English colonies in North America were confined to Newfoundland and the western strip between the Alleghany Mountains and the sea, the Bermudas and Bahamas in the Atlantic, Jamaica, Barbados, and a few other small islands in the Caribbean Sea. In Canada to the north, therefore, and in the great basin of the Mississippi to the south France had ample opportunity for further

<sup>1</sup> The French East India Company was founded in 1664. In the West Indies France held St. Domingo, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Martinique; in America, Canada, part of Nova Scotia and Louisiana; in Africa, Senegal.

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advance. Brazil in South America and the settlements once made by Portugal in Africa, had languished since the mother country had been absorbed by Spain, and even when she did regain her independence she was in no position to fight for her possessions. In India the English East India Company was as yet a feeble trading company with no pretensions to empire. In a word, the colonial empires of Spain and of Portugal were falling to pieces; that of England had only just been started; while Holland, the only dangerous rival, could not possibly have prevented a French empire, or done much more than preserve what she at present possessed.<sup>1</sup> Thus France might have anticipated England, and if she had further pursued Colbert's policy of establishing a strong navy she might well have proved victorious when the final struggle came.

It may, no doubt, be questioned whether the French had really the necessary qualities to become successful colonists, or whether emigrants would have been found in sufficient quantities; but that France needed peace and not war can scarcely be disputed.

Unfortunately, though the ambitions of Louis

<sup>1</sup> The only important Dutch settlements in the West were New Amsterdam in North America (ceded to England, 1674, and called New York), and Dutch Guiana in South America. In Africa they held the Cape, many factories on the Persian Gulf and along the Indian coast, the islands of Mauritius, Ceylon, Sumatra, Java, part of Borneo and the Celebes, and the large isthmus of Malacca.

were not confined to Europe, he wished to be master in Europe first. The extension of the French frontier, especially towards the Rhine, was part of the national tradition; most great kings of France had distinguished themselves in war, and the young King desired to outrival them. The position of European affairs seemed most propitious, for there was no one State which was strong enough to resist. The ease with which he had stilled all opposition within the kingdom led Louis to overestimate his powers, and the partial success of Colbert's reforms gave him ready money. Tempted by his opportunities, he determined on a policy of unnecessary and of unjustifiable aggression, and dreamt not only of fresh conquests but of subduing Europe itself.

A pretext alone was necessary, and that was soon found. Louis XIV., it will be remembered, had married the eldest daughter of Philip IV. and the only child by his first marriage. On the death, therefore, of the Spanish King (1665), he claimed all the Spanish Netherlands in her name, in virtue of the Law of Devolution, whereby he asserted that all the father's rights passed to the child of the first marriage, to the exclusion of the children of any subsequent marriage. The claim was altogether baseless, for this law or local custom only obtained in some parts of the Netherlands, and moreover applied to private property exclusively and not to the sovereignty. In the war which was commenced in May, 1667, the success of Louis seemed certain.

The War  
of Devolu-  
tion,  
1667-1668

## 24 THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

Spain was hampered by the attempt of Portugal to regain her independence, which had received French support. The Emperor Leopold was engaged in suppressing a revolt in Hungary. Many of the German princes were bribed, and Sweden was forced by threats to acquiesce, while Holland and England were still at war over commercial matters. The advance, therefore, of the French was only feebly opposed. In August, Turenne occupied the three most important fortresses on the frontier—Charleroi, Tournay and Lille—and the whole of the Netherlands appeared to lie within his grasp.

The Triple  
Alliance,  
Jan.-May,  
1688

Yet Louis was to be balked of his prey. Europe became seriously alarmed. Holland and England had now come to terms, and Charles II., bending before the popular feeling, allowed his representative at the Hague, Sir William Temple, to form the Triple Alliance with Holland and with Sweden. Louis, indeed, anxious to have something which he might use for the purpose of bargaining, sent Condé to occupy Franche Comté, which he did with his well-known dash. The coalition, however, was a formidable one. Spain had in February made peace with Portugal and recognised her independence and thus had her hands free, and the French King, with a prudence which did him credit, determined to treat.

The members of the Triple Alliance, anxious if possible to prevent any further continuance of the war, had prevailed upon the King of Spain to submit to some loss and to allow France either to keep her conquests in the Netherlands, or to retain Franche

Comté. Louis took advantage of this. He induced the Emperor Leopold to promise in a secret treaty (January, 1668) that, on the death of the childless Charles II. of Spain, Franche Comté and the Spanish Netherlands should fall to France, and having thus provided against the future, offered peace to Spain on condition that he should retain his conquests in the Netherlands while he surrendered Franche Comté. Spain was forced to acquiesce. Accordingly in May, 1668, the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle

The Peace  
of Aix-la-  
Chapelle,  
May, 1668

Left France in possession of Charleroi, Lille, Tournay and eight other towns on the frontier of the Netherlands.

Thus Louis had secured a strong position which would form a basis for future advance. The peace would give him time to recruit his forces, and meanwhile the Coalition might by clever management be dissolved.

Charles II. was first approached. He had followed the popular impulse in forming the Triple Alliance, but the commercial jealousy between England and Holland still survived, and there were more potent influences with the King himself. Although too indolent to attempt the definite establishment of despotism, he disliked the restraints imposed upon him by his Parliament, and longed to be free from its financial control. Moreover, he desired, if not to re-establish Roman Catholicism, at least to secure complete toleration for the adherents of that faith. But these two aims could only be attained by the help of Louis, and accordingly in June, 1670, Charles signed



## 26 THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

Secret  
Treaty of  
Dover,  
June, 1670

the Secret Treaty of Dover, by which he pledged himself in return for a promise of money to break with Holland.

Two years later the Swedish Council of Regency, which ruled during the minority of Charles XI., was also bought. Meanwhile the neutrality of the Emperor and of many German princes, with the exception, however, of the Elector of Brandenburg, was secured, and Louis was free at last to wreak his vengeance on the defenceless republic of Holland.

The French diplomacy of these past three years had been exceedingly clever, and from a military point of view, the attack on Holland had much to be said for it, for Holland once gained, the Spanish Netherlands must fall to France. Yet Europe was certain to be aroused by the renewed danger of French supremacy, and the only question was whether France could overwhelm the Republic before Europe moved. Louis might well anticipate success, for neither the character of the Government of the Republic, nor the internal situation at the moment offered much chance of instant and effective resistance.

Character  
of Dutch  
govern-  
ment

The constitution of the seven united Provinces<sup>1</sup> was that of a confederation of very independent States which had handed over to a central representative body (the Estates-general), and to a central Council of State, the control of matters common to all, and the appointment of the Captain-general

<sup>1</sup> They were Holland, Friesland, Zeeland, Utrecht, Guelderland, Overijssel, Gröningen.

and the Admiral-general, who presided over the military and naval forces, while they retained not only all local administration in their hands, but also the election of their "stadholders," the voting of supplies and the questions of peace and war. By custom, though not by law, most of the Provinces had always, since the war of independence in the sixteenth century, elected the head of the House of Orange as stadholder, Captain-general and Admiral-general, and as this official was a member of the Council of State and nominated the chief magistrates, the unity of the confederation was thereby strengthened as well as by the fact that the Province of Holland, both in wealth and importance, nearly equalled that of the other provinces together.

During the great struggle for independence against Spain, 1572-1609, the necessities of the time had rendered unity imperative, but no sooner was independence gained than the forces of disunion began to be strengthened by party and religious strife. The stadholder, supported by the country districts, the nobles, the Calvinistic clergy and the peasantry, hoped to increase the central authority under his leadership, while privileged burghers of the great towns fought for a continuance of provincial autonomy and a republican constitution, and were further opposed to extreme Calvinistic doctrines. The failure of an attempt to turn the stadholderate into an hereditary monarchy by William II. of Orange, and his death shortly after (November, 1650), had indeed increased the strength

Character  
and  
position of  
De Witt,  
1650-1672

of the burgher party, the office of stadholder was abolished, and since that date the destinies of Holland had been guided by John de Witt. This great statesman represented all that was best in the Dutch character. To the simplicity, the straightforwardness, the stubbornness in the face of adversity, and the prudence in time of success, which were peculiarly the characteristic of his countrymen, he added a refinement, an eloquence, and a gift for diplomacy which were not so common. He had indeed fallen on troublous times, but he had guided his country safely through all dangers. He had dared resist the belligerent Commonwealth of England in their attempt to ruin the Dutch carrying trade, and though forced to bow before the superior artillery of the English, and the tactics of Blake (1654), had again renewed the struggle against Charles II. of England (1665-1667). Once more, indeed, the English proved the stronger, yet at one moment the Dutch De Ruyter succeeded in sailing up the Thames and the Medway, in capturing one and destroying two other ships, and finally England had consented at the Treaty of Breda to relax the Navigation Laws<sup>1</sup> so far as to allow Dutch ships to carry to England goods from Germany and from Flanders.

Treaty of  
Breda,  
July, 1667

By the conclusion of the Triple Alliance, which shortly followed, the triumph of De Witt's policy

<sup>1</sup>The Navigation Act of the Commonwealth forbade foreign ships to bring any goods to England except those of their own country. It was aimed chiefly at the Dutch, who were then the chief carriers of Europe.

seemed to be permanently secured. As events proved, it only prepared his final overthrow. With all his diplomacy, De Witt failed to plumb the depth of Charles II.'s duplicity, or to realise the weakness of the King of Sweden. He believed, and believed rightly, that Europe would not acquiesce in the overthrow of his country without a struggle; but he did not realise the necessity of constant watchfulness, and in this matter was to some extent blinded by party considerations. In the hopes of conciliating the Orange party, he had in 1668, by the Project of Harmony, obtained for the son of William II., the future William III. of England, the command of the army when he should reach the age of twenty-two; he was then eighteen.

When, therefore, Louis finally declared war, the <sup>The Dutch</sup> unfortunate Republic found itself without allies and <sup>War,</sup> utterly unprepared. In May, 1673, the French King <sup>1673-1676</sup> having seized Lorraine, on the pretext that the Duke had been intriguing with Holland, advanced down the Meuse to Maestricht and thence to Neuss on the Rhine, where the friendly Elector of Cologne had allowed supplies to be collected. His army, commanded by the great strategist Turenne, and the brilliant cavalry leader Condé, marched down the Rhine without opposition till it reached the neighbourhood of Arnheim. Then, swinging to the left, it crossed the old Rhine at Tolhuys, and turned the position of the young Prince of Orange, who was holding the line of the Yssel.

Amsterdam seemed now doomed. A rapid advance

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on Muyden might, it has been said, have placed the control of the sluices of that district in French hands, and prevented the Dutch from flooding the country. This may be so, for the Dutch did not decide to cut the dykes till 15th June, and this was not completely effected till the 20th, though it may be questioned whether in any case the French could have advanced quickly enough.

By the 20th of June, at all events, the country had been flooded, and Amsterdam and most of the Province of Holland was for a time safe from all attack. Elsewhere, however, the Peace party were strong. Accordingly, on the 26th the States General offered to pay a large indemnity and to cede the important fortress of Maestricht on the Meuse and the district round it. Louis, however, puffed up by his success, demanded higher terms. The Dutch refused, overthrew the party of the burghers, and gave to young

William of  
Orange  
made  
Stadholder,  
July

William of Orange the post of Stadholder, as well as that of Captain and Admiral-general (July 3-4). The popular indignation, fanned no doubt by party spirit, was not yet satisfied. It demanded a victim, and that victim De Witt, who had for twenty years guided his country's fortunes with such wisdom. From a first attempt on his life on 21st June he had escaped, but at the end of August he and his brother were dragged from prison, where they were awaiting their trial, and brutally murdered in the streets of The Hague. It does not indeed appear that William of Orange himself was directly implicated in this foul deed. Neverthe-

Murder of  
De Witt,  
August

less, he took care to know nothing of the intended outrage and did not intervene. In short, the future King of England here first displayed the callous and calculating temperament which ever alienates our sympathies.

Once more the Dutch, against the wish of William, sought for peace. They offered to surrender practically the whole of their eastern frontier from the Meuse to the Scheldt. This would have given France a magnificent position for any further attack on the United Provinces, and would have left the Spanish Netherlands at her mercy. Louis, however, urged by Louvois, his Minister of War, only raised his terms still higher. He himself acknowledged subsequently that he was driven on by ambition, which he pleaded was pardonable in a prince so young and so well treated by fortune as he had been.

But his ambition had overleapt itself. William was thereby enabled to pursue his policy of no surrender, and Louis soon found, as he had found before, that Europe had to be reckoned with.

In October, the Emperor Leopold, and the Great Elector of Brandenburg, made an offensive alliance with the Dutch Republic, and though the latter was defeated by Turenne in the following June and forced to withdraw, the coalition steadily grew. In August, 1673, Lorraine and Spain; in January, 1674, Denmark; in March, the Elector Palatine and other German princes were added to the League, while in February, 1679, the English Parliament forced Charles II. to abandon his French ally, and Sweden alone remained.

Alliance  
against  
France,  
1672-1674

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The struggle indeed continued with success for France. Spain, as usual, was the one to suffer most. She saw Franche Comté once more in French hands, while the Spanish Netherlands became again the theatre of war.

Battle of  
Fehrbellin

The following year, however (1675), closed gloomily for Louis. In June, the King of Sweden was decisively defeated by the Great Elector at Fehrbellin near Berlin. More serious was the loss of Turenne. After a most brilliant winter campaign in Alsace, he had driven the Austrian troops under Montecuculi and the Great Elector across the Rhine. Having pursued Montecuculi to the Black Forest, he was struck down by a stray shot just as a complete victory appeared within his grasp. In the autumn ill health forced Condé to resign.

Death of  
Turenne,  
July 27,  
1675

France had now lost her two great generals and was thoroughly exhausted. The struggle, however, still continued for three weary years (1676-1678), marked only by a victory of the Duke of Orleans, the brother of Louis, over William of Orange, a victory it is said which caused the jealous King extreme disgust.

Meanwhile Louis, convinced that nothing more was to be gained by war, betook himself to diplomacy, and by his cleverness succeeded in extricating himself from a perilous position with some success.

He turned first to England and prevented that country from active interference by supporting the Whigs, some of whom were bribed, in their attacks on Charles; then, working on the jealousies which are

always the chief weakness of a coalition, he succeeded in concluding separate treaties with his foes. By the Peace of Nimeguen the Dutch lost nothing.

Peace of  
Nimeguen,  
Aug. 1678-  
Feb. 1679

Spain, which had not been a principal in the war, was the chief sufferer. She had to surrender Franche Comté as well as several fortresses in the low countries which gave France a strong frontier from Dunkirk to the Meuse.<sup>1</sup> The Emperor exchanged Freiburg for Philipsburg, while the Duke of Lorraine, rejecting the terms offered to him, became a soldier of fortune in Austrian pay.

Louis had not succeeded in punishing the insolent Dutch Republic, but so far as actual gains went, the war had not been barren.

The frontier towards the Spanish Netherlands had been materially strengthened, Lorraine was temporarily occupied, and the possession of Freiburg in Breisgau gave him the command of one of the most important passes through the Black Forest to the Upper Danube. Above all, he had acquired Franche Comté, a province much desired by France for two centuries; he had pushed the frontier to the Jura and secured the watershed of the Saone. Yet France had paid heavily for these gains. The frontier provinces had been wasted by war. The exchequer was empty, in spite of increased taxation and heavy loans. Turenne, the best general, was dead, and Condé was now past work.

Unfortunately the ambitious King refused to consider this side of the picture. He thought only of

<sup>1</sup>The most important are Cambrai, Valenciennes, St. Omer, Ypres, Cassel, Dinan.



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his notable successes both in war and diplomacy. He despised his foes, and looked around for further opportunities of aggrandisement.

Chambres  
de Réunion

The Peace of Nimeguen had scarce been concluded before Louis began to move. According to the terms of that peace, as well as that of Westphalia, the districts and towns ceded to France had included their dependencies. To settle what these dependencies were, he proceeded to establish judicial courts, called Chambres de Réunion. Of these there were four: the first at Tournay, for Flanders; the second at Besançon, for Franche Comté; another at Metz, for the three bishoprics; and the fourth at Breisach, for Alsace. The work of the first two was soon finished, and their decisions, which settled the question of the Flemish towns and adjudged all Franche Comté to France, were not unjust. Nor perhaps can much exception be taken to the verdicts of the chamber at Metz. It had to decide what were the possessions and who the feudal vassals of the three bishops, since all such were to recognise the sovereignty of the King of France. The question was a difficult one, for during the troublous times of late many lands had been wrongfully seized, and many had tried to escape their feudal dues. Here again, therefore, no gross injustice was perpetrated.

Far otherwise was it with the chamber at Breisach. The Peace of Westphalia,<sup>1</sup> although its terms were vague, had distinctly reserved the rights

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 3.

of the Empire over the "immediate" nobles of Lower Alsace, that is, those who held directly of the Emperor, and over those Imperial towns that lay in the same district, as well as the independence of Strasburg. Nevertheless, the chamber gave absolute and exclusive sovereignty over Upper as well as Lower Alsace to Louis, thereby making the immediate nobles vassals of the French King, and by implication handing over the Imperial towns in Lower Alsace to him. Louis forthwith proceeded to enforce the verdicts of the chamber by bribes, by intrigue, and by force. The victims of this shameless act of spoliation were defenceless without the help of the European Powers, and they were not prepared. Austria was once more troubled with her Hungarian rebels, who were aided by the Turks. The Elector of Brandenburg cared little for these places on the Rhine, and had his own quarrels with the Emperor, while Charles II. of England, though disturbed by these fresh encroachments, was driven by the violence of the Whigs in the matter of the Exclusion Bill<sup>1</sup> to become the pensioner of the French King, and thus escape from the necessity of summoning Parliament (March, 1681).

Louis, therefore, met with little opposition, except at Strasburg; and even there, by bribery and by a display of force, he at last attained his end. In September, 1681, he was master of the most important town on the Upper Rhine, as well as

<sup>1</sup> A Bill to exclude James, the Roman Catholic brother of Charles II., from the succession.

Besançon, and on the same day Casale in Montferrat was occupied with the assent of the Duke of Mantua. These fortresses were now strengthened by the great French engineer Vauban, and France was henceforth girded with a line of first-rate fortresses on her eastern border; while Casale, in addition to Pignerole (which had been gained in 1648), gave her armies an easy access to the plain of Lombardy.

Even then Louis was not content. Luxemburg, he declared, was necessary to complete the line of fortresses on the east; but since no chamber could grant him that, he attempted to seize it (November, 1681). Warned, however, by the murmurs of Europe, he drew back, and once more betook himself to negotiations, which even the news that the Turks were at the gates of Vienna (June, 1683) did not interrupt.

Ever since the days of Charles V. and of Francis I. there had been an alliance with the Turks, but France had never actually assisted them, and Louis certainly had no such design. His wish to secure the command of the Mediterranean and to make himself master of the African coast, as well as his pretensions to be the head of the Catholic cause in Europe, rendered such a policy quite impossible. Nevertheless, in Austria's danger lay the opportunity of France. Louis hoped that the siege might fail, but was not unwilling that it should continue. And if the worst came to the worst and the city fell, he could then lead a crusading army of French and

Germans against the infidel, stand forth as the saviour of Christendom, and secure for himself the election of the Imperial crown on the death of the present Emperor. This, at least, was not to be. John Sobieski, the Polish King, marched to the relief of the Austrian capital, drove back the Turks (September, 1683), and snatched from Louis the title of Deliverer of Christendom.

John  
Sobieski  
saves  
Vienna  
from the  
Turk,  
Sept. 1683

On hearing of the relief of Vienna, Charles II. of Spain declared war on France (October, 1683), but only to find himself without allies, and once more to suffer loss. The French took Luxemburg in the following June, and Spain was forced to buy peace by surrendering that town, Bouvines, and other villages near Luxemburg and in Hainault, as well as the protectorate over Genoa. Finally the Emperor and the Imperial Diet, by the Truce of Ratisbon, guaranteed to France for twenty years the possession of all that had been assigned to her by the chambers of Metz, Breisach and Besançon.

Truce of  
Ratisbon,  
Aug. 1684

Louis, to all appearances triumphant abroad, now turned his attention to ecclesiastical affairs at home. His policy is characteristic of the man. As in State, so in matters ecclesiastical, he desired to establish uniformity based upon the personal authority of the Crown. These views had already brought him into conflict with the Pope. A quarrel which arose in 1673 over the claims of the Crown to the revenues of all vacant benefices in France had led Louis to revive the ancient rights of the Gallican Church, and to induce his clergy to assert not only the superiority

Quarrel  
with Pope  
Innocent  
XI.

The Four  
Articles of  
S. Germain,  
1682

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of a General Council of the Church over a Pope, but to deny his pretensions to overrule the customs and rules of the Church of France, and his claim to depose a King, or in any way interfere in matters temporal. Louis did not intend to break from Rome. He only insisted that the Pope should not interfere with his temporal authority over the Church in France. This had long been the policy of the kings of Spain, the most orthodox of sovereigns and of the ancient Republic of Venice, who said they would accept their religion but not their Church government from Rome. Nevertheless it was certain that, if Louis had his way, the Church would become a mere creature of the Crown, and in any case it was not to be expected that the Pope would tamely acquiesce. Innocent XI. at once condemned the "Resolutions," and refused to sanction the consecration of any bishop who accepted them. A long struggle ensued, not ended till 1693, during which as many as thirty Sees were without bishops, and more than one hundred parishes without canonically instituted priests.

Persecution  
of the  
Huguenots

The desire of Louis XIV. to be free from external interference in the government of the Church may find its apologists, but few would now approve of his policy towards the Huguenots. The Huguenots, or Protestants of France, had since the days of Henry IV. enjoyed, by the Edict of Nantes, a toleration which was denied them in all Roman Catholic countries, and which exceeded that accorded to Nonconformists by Protestant England herself; and although Car-

dinal Richelieu had withdrawn their privilege of organising self-governing communities in several parts of France, he had left them their liberty of worship. To a mind like that of Louis, the very existence of such a state of things was abhorrent. He was the enemy of privilege, and they were a privileged body.

He had attempted to establish a uniform centralised government in matters political, and the existence of this body of Nonconformists seemed to him an anomaly. In spite of his quarrel with the Pope he was severely orthodox, and became as life grew on more devout. He loved to pose as the most Catholic King, and was daily assuming the position hitherto held by the King of Spain. His Catholic clergy, headed by Bossuet, the greatest ecclesiastical statesman of the day, then Bishop of Meaux, as well as Père la Chaise, his Jesuit confessor, never ceased to urge that the extirpation of heresy would well befit the most Christian King.

Ever since the year 1661 a policy of repression had been pursued. The clauses of the Edict of Nantes had been narrowly interpreted, and many liberties thereby interfered with. In the year 1681 further measures followed. All Huguenots were debarred from public employment, their children were ordered to be converted, and energetic attempts made to force the parents to conform. When the unfortunate victims of this policy sought refuge in exile, emigration was forbidden, and conversion was enforced by quartering soldiers on the obstinate. Finally the King, perhaps misled as to the success of these

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Edict of  
Nantes  
revoked,  
1685

measures, decided to settle the business. In 1685 the Edict of Nantes was revoked, and the profession of Huguenot opinions became a legal crime, while, in the following year, the Duke of Savoy was forced to expel his Protestant subjects from the valleys of the Pays du Vaud, lest by their proximity they might infect France, now restored to orthodoxy.

It has been usual to lay this persecution at the door of that remarkable woman, Mme. de Maintenon, who, once the governess of the royal children, had become the King's chief confidante, and had been secretly married to him in 1684. But, although it was largely due to her that Louis reformed his life and became more strict and more devout, we have the evidence of her own letters to prove that, if anxious for the conversion of the heretics, she did not approve of these violent measures of repression, perhaps because she remembered that she had once been a Huguenot herself.<sup>1</sup>

No, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes is so completely a part of Louis' policy that the chief responsibility must lie with him, though none the less it must also be shared by the whole body of the clergy and by a large proportion of the nation itself. Nor must we judge of Louis by the standard of our own day. France had hitherto been in advance of the rest of Europe in the matter of toleration; and if Louis, in reversing this policy, acted with unnecessary and even brutal severity, we must, while con-

<sup>1</sup> She was the widow of the burlesque poet Scarron, and was born a Protestant.

denning him, remember how every Catholic sovereign of the day treated the Protestants in his own country, and how Protestant England treated the Catholics in Ireland.

Yet if his conduct does not deserve to be called a heinous crime it was at least a serious blunder. The Huguenots at that time were in most parts of France composed of the middle and industrial classes, who, by their labour and their enterprise, were enriching France; and these, to the number of at least 300,000, left their country and planted their industries in other lands, Holland and England more especially. Nor was this all. Many joined the armies of the enemies of France, and took their share in inflicting those losses which she was henceforth to suffer.

While Louis was thus depriving his country of some of the best of her sons, and spending enormous sums on his new palace at Versailles, Europe was preparing to resist him once more. Divided though she was, his late aggressions had touched too many interests and awakened too many apprehensions. In the year 1681 a premature attempt at coalition had been made, and finally in July, 1686, the League of Augsburg was formed. League of Augsburg, July, 1686 It was joined by the Emperor, the Kings of Spain and Sweden, the Elector of Saxony and by the United Provinces. In the next year the Duke of Bavaria and Victor Amadeus, the Duke of Savoy, subscribed to the League, while even Pope Innocent XI., still at variance with Louis, gave it his secret support.

The French King forthwith demanded that the



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Truce of Ratisbon (*cf.* p. 37) should be turned into a definite peace, and that his creature, William of Fürstenberg, should be recognised as Archbishop and Elector of Cologne, although he had not been properly elected. On the refusal of ~~these demands~~, Louis seized the opportunity offered by the death of Charles Elector Palatine,<sup>1</sup> last male representative of the Simmern family, and invaded the country. He claimed it in the name of Charlotte Elizabeth, the sister of the late Elector, who had married his brother the Duke of Orleans.

Invasion  
of the  
Palatinate,  
Sept. 1688

This invasion has often been held to be the capital blunder of the French King. Had he, it is said, attacked Holland instead, William of Orange would never have dared to cross to England at the invitation of the Whig Lords; the Revolution of 1688 would not have occurred, at that moment at least, and James II., forced by necessity to ally himself with Louis, might have altered the fortunes of the coming war. It is even alleged that Louis, piqued at the refusal of James to lend him his support, or to oppose the landing of William by a joint movement of the French and English fleets, a policy which public opinion in England would not brook, made his move on the Palatinate of design, so that William might be free to sail. It is probably true that Louis and his advisers imagined that the struggle in England would be prolonged. As James would not, or

<sup>1</sup> Charles was brother of Prince Rupert and son of the unfortunate Frederick, the Winter King, who married the daughter of James I. of England.

could not, abet his schemes, it might well be that such a struggle would completely paralyse the action of England for a time at least. With England neutral, and William fully occupied, France might again defeat or break up the coalition, as she had done before. In any case, it is extremely doubtful whether an attack on Holland could have been made with sufficient rapidity to stop William's expedition. Louis' main aim, was to compel Germany to make permanent the Truce of Ratisbon. The invasion of the Palatinate might well be expected to gain that end, especially as Louis offered to withdraw at once and even to surrender Freiburg in the Breisgau on that condition. The blunder was due rather to a want of knowledge of the true situation in England, but even Englishmen never dreamt that James would take to flight and abandon his crown without an effort. The truth of the matter is that Louis was blinded by his arrogance. He had so often defeated these coalitions by war or by diplomacy that he believed it could be done again, and he would not realise that under existing circumstances this was impossible without the aid of England.

The invasion of the Palatinate served only to arouse the hostility of many German princes who had hesitated. Louis soon found that the country could not be held, and accordingly proceeded to order its devastation, to the grief of the Duchess of Orleans herself, who did not desire that her claim should be enforced at such a cost to its unfortunate inhabitants.

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Flight of  
James II.  
William  
III. King  
of England

Meanwhile William of Orange had sailed, on the very day that Philipsburg fell, the first city in the Palatinate to be attacked. The crown of England was his, and James II. was a fugitive in France. From that moment the fortunes of Louis XIV. depended on the restoration of James. Had the later Stuarts been true to the best interests of their country, French ambition would have been bridled before. Owing to the political circumstances of the time, England could incline the balance any way she chose, and now that William was King there was no doubt as to the scale into which her influence would be cast. The one motive of his life is to be found in his opposition to the French King, an opposition which was based on fundamental differences of temperament and opinion. As a man, as a Protestant, as a Dutch patriot, as an European statesman the views of Louis were accursed things to him. Here William found the inspiring enthusiasm which warmed his otherwise cold and calculating heart, and made him capable of great things. He had been called to power to save his country from French invasion, and from that moment he was the moving spirit of every coalition against his arch enemy. Nor was he to be despised. Though never beloved, he was at least respected. If he was no great general, and won few victories, he knew how to neutralise the results of defeat, and above all, he prevented others from despairing of his cause because he never despaired himself.

It is then the entrance of England, led by such

a man, into the struggle, and the new importance which, in consequence, the question of the command of the sea assumes, that gives the chief interest to the war of the League of Augsburg. Otherwise so far as the Continent is concerned, although larger forces were engaged than had been ever seen in Europe before, it is a weary story of sieges, scarce relieved by any battle of first-rate importance, while on neither side did any great general appear with the exception perhaps of the French marshal, Luxembourg.

Louis was rightly advised when he decided to send James II. to Ireland to support him there. If Ireland could be held, William could scarcely send an army abroad, while her harbours would form an excellent basis for the French fleet. The defeat, however, at the Boyne once more drove James into exile, and Catholic Ireland was forced to submit to the hateful rule of Protestant England. The question of the supremacy at sea lay longer in dispute, and in 1692 it seemed not unlikely to fall to France. She had made a great effort, and organised a fleet, under the command of Tourville, which was to prepare the way for an invasion of England. In that country there was much discontent, and many, including Russell, the English admiral, were intriguing with James II. But though many might be anxious to restore James, they were not prepared to see this done by French arms, and Russell, declaring that he would throw the first man overboard who whispered treason, led his fleet to victory at La Hogue in May, 1692. England henceforth was safe, and

Battle of  
the Boyne  
July, 1690

Battle of  
La Hogue,  
May, 1692

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William could once more actively intervene on the Continent.

French  
Victories  
on land

Here the struggle extended from the Rhine to Piedmont. In Italy the French defeated the Duke of Savoy at Staffarda (August, 1690), and in 1693 drove Prince Eugène from Piedmont. In the Netherlands they took Mons (April, 1691), and Namur in June, 1692, an important fortress which stands at the junction of the Sambre and the Meuse, and thus commands the great military road from France. In the same year William was defeated at Steinkirk by Marshal Luxemburg (August), and again at Neerwinden in the following June. It is true that in 1695, William, whom no defeat could cow, was able to recover Namur, yet on the whole the advantage lay with Louis. When therefore in October, 1696, he succeeded in buying off Victor Amadeus by restoring Savoy, which had been occupied, and by ceding Casale and Pignerole, it looked as if France might end the war without loss.

But Louis could not hide his eyes to the desperate exhaustion of his people which Fénelon, then Archbishop of Cambrai, one of the best of clergy of his day, had pointed out as early as 1693. Although Louis was not likely to follow Fénelon's injunction to expiate his past misdeeds by the surrender of all his unjust conquests, he was anxious to recruit his forces in preparation for the great European crisis which must arise on the death of Charles II. of Spain. He therefore offered to treat.

His terms proved far more moderate than had

been expected, and accordingly negotiations were set on foot, which led in the autumn of 1697 to the Peace of Ryswick. By that Peace, Louis was forced to disgorge some of his ill-gotten gains.

Peace of  
Ryswick,  
Sept.-Oct  
1697

1. He restored all places adjudged to him by the chambers of Reunion, or seized outside Alsace and Franche Comté since the Peace of Nimeguen.

2. He allowed the Dutch to garrison certain fortresses on the western border of the Spanish Netherlands, such as Ypres, Menin and Namur, as a "barrier" against French aggression. He granted them a favourable commercial treaty, although they in return restored Pondicherry in India to the French East India Company.

3. He surrendered Lorraine with the exception of the three bishoprics to its Duke, and bartered his claim on the Palatinate for a sum of money.

4. He abandoned the candidature of Cardinal Fürstenberg to the archepiscopal See of Cologne. He acknowledged William as King of England and promised to support no attempt against his throne.

A limit had at last been put to Louis' aggression; his prestige had been lowered in Europe, while at home his country was at the last stage of exhaustion. The taxes had been heavily increased; the debt had grown; the Crown had been forced to betake itself to a renewed sale of offices to fill the empty treasury and there was no Colbert to grapple with the growing evil.<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless the gains of Louis since the Peace of Nimeguen had been considerable. He had retired to the left bank of the Rhine, he had surrendered

<sup>1</sup> Colbert died in 1683.

some of the fortresses on the frontier of the Spanish Netherlands, and allowed others to be garrisoned by the Dutch against him. By abandoning Pignerole and Casale he had handed over to the Duke of Savoy the gate into Italy. Yet for all this the acquisition of all Alsace with Strasburg was a solid compensation. Doubtless the accession of William III. to the throne of England was a serious blow, but William was not in a position to assume the offensive even if he had wished so to do, and, if no new crisis had arisen, Louis might henceforth have sheathed his sword, and have turned to heal the distress of his people, which these long wars had caused.

The fates however willed it otherwise.

## CHAPTER III

### THE WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION—CLOSE OF THE REIGN OF LOUIS XIV

FOR many years the powers of Europe had looked forward with apprehension to the day when the childless Charles II. of Spain should die. His dominions, in spite of his late losses, were enormous. They included the whole of the Spanish Peninsula, with the exception of Portugal and the Balearic isles, the Spanish Netherlands, the Milanese, Naples and Sicily, and certain ports on the coast of Tuscany as well as parts of North Africa and the Canary Islands, enormous colonies in Central and South America, and many islands in the Gulf of Mexico, in the Caribbean Sea, and in the Pacific.<sup>1</sup>

The question of the succession was as momentous

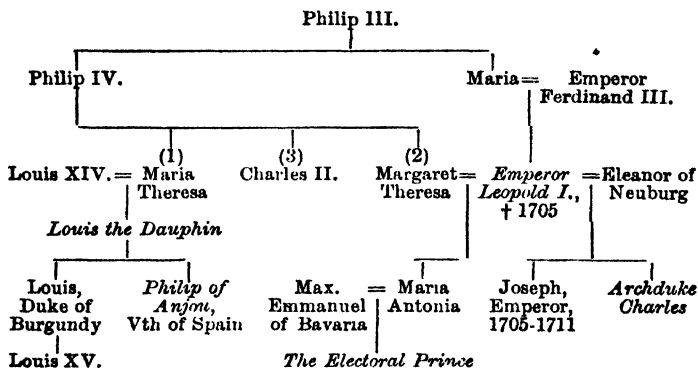
<sup>1</sup>Spain claimed the whole of Central and South America except Brazil, which belonged to Portugal, and Guiana which belonged to Holland. Mexico, Florida, and Peru were then the most important of the West Indian possessions. Cuba and Hayti were the largest islands. In the Pacific she held the Philippines.



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as it was inevitable.<sup>1</sup> It involved the most serious issues, touching not only the commercial interests of England and Holland, but the prosperity of all the Powers and the very existence of some. Under these circumstances, it was absurd to expect that the question should be decided on mere legal grounds, as would be the case with regard to the succession to a private estate, and it is not fair to charge statesmen with cloaking their ambitions under the hypocritical cry of the necessity of maintaining the balance of

### THE SPANISH SUCCESSION



1. The Electoral Prince claimed as great-grandson of Philip IV.
2. The Emperor Leopold I. claimed: (1) as the grandson of Philip III.; (2) that he had married the second daughter of Philip IV., and that his daughter, Maria Antonia, had surrendered her right to him. He, however, passed on his claim to his second son, the Archduke Charles.
3. The Dauphin claimed through his mother, Maria Theresa, the eldest daughter of Philip IV. Louis XIV., on marrying her, had renounced all claims she might have on Spain, but held that the renunciation was void because: (a) her dowry had never been paid; (b) the renunciation had never been confirmed, either by the Cortes, or by the Parliament of Paris.

power, or to liken them to harpies fighting over the body of their dying victim.

The problem had long engaged the attention of the diplomatists. As early as 1668, Louis had signed a Partition Treaty with the Emperor by which the Emperor was, on the death of Charles II., to have Spain, the Milanese, and the Indies, while Franche Comté, the Netherlands, Naples and Sicily were to fall to France. Franche Comté Louis had now gained, but Holland and England would never, he was sure, allow him to hold the rest. A new arrangement must be made, and it is probable that the predominant motive which had induced Louis to accept such moderate terms at Ryswick is to be found in the hope that he might, by clever diplomacy, gain more than was possible by a continuance of the war. At all events, no sooner was the peace concluded than Louis opened negotiations with England and with Holland.

Of the many claims to the Spanish throne, that of the Electoral Prince of Bavaria was the most favoured, because his succession, accompanied by certain concessions to the other claimants, would not endanger the balance of power. By the first Partition Treaty, therefore, it was decided that he should have Spain, the Netherlands and the Indies, while the remainder were to be divided between the Archduke Charles and the Dauphin. Even had the Electoral Prince lived, it is doubtful whether either Spain or the Emperor would have acquiesced. In any case his death in January, 1699, reopened the whole question.

First  
Partition  
Treaty,  
Oct. 1698

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Louis XIV., who throughout the negotiations showed a very remarkable knowledge of the European situation, abandoned all hope of gaining Spain itself for the Dauphin, and devoted his energies to securing as much of the other territories as possible for France.

Second  
Partition  
Treaty,  
May, 1700

By the second Partition Treaty, signed once more by England, Holland and France, the Archduke Charles was to succeed to Spain, the Spanish Netherlands and the Indies; while to the Dauphin were promised Guipuscoa in Navarre, Naples and Sicily, the Tuscan ports and the Milanese, though this was to be exchanged for Lorraine.

The Emperor, however, complained that this Partition Treaty would, by giving the command of the Mediterranean to France, leave his son, as King of Spain, entirely at her mercy, and refused to accept it.

Will and  
death of  
Charles II.,  
Oct.-Nov.  
1700

Meanwhile in Spain the news that her ancient empire was to be divided caused the greatest indignation. The Queen, who was the Emperor's sister-in-law, forthwith urged him to support the national cry, and to send the Archduke at once to Madrid. But Leopold was not prepared thus to lay down the challenge to Europe, and declined. The Queen and her Austrian party thus lost all influence; a court revolution took place, and Charles II., induced to believe that France was the most likely country to fight for the integrity of the Spanish Empire, left the whole of his dominions by will to the Duke of Anjou, the second son of the Dauphin, with remainder to his younger brother, the Duke of Berri,

and, in his default, to the Archduke Charles, should the Duke of Anjou ever succeed to the French throne. All alienation of Spanish possessions was forbidden, and no foreigners were to be admitted into the Government. Thirty days later Charles II. died.

The terms accepted by Louis XIV. in the Partition Treaty were so moderate, and the prospect offered by the will so magnificent, that Louis has been accused of deluding Europe with negotiations, while he was intriguing through Harcourt, his Minister at Madrid, to extort that will at Charles' death-bed. Although it is certain that Louis had by his diplomacy completely outwitted the Emperor, and had succeeded in making the French cause popular in Spain—no mean performance, if we remember how Louis had treated that country—this accusation is probably unjust. Indeed it may be questioned whether France would not have gained more by the treaty that she did under the will. With the territories allotted by the treaty to the Dauphin, territories which would some day be united to the Crown, the strength of France would have been much increased. The possession of Guipuscoa would serve as a centre for a future attack on Navarre. The exchange of the Milanese for Lorraine would some day lead to the incorporation of the Duchy of Lorraine with France, and this had always been one of the chief aims of Louis. Sicily, Naples and the Tuscan ports would be invaluable as a basis for a great navy, which might dominate the Mediterranean; and France, once

master there, would not only be able to establish her power on the northern coast of Africa, but would control the important commerce of that sea. One objection might, no doubt, be raised. With the Milanese in the hands of the Duke of Lorraine, and Piedmont and Savoy in those of the Duke of Savoy, neither of them very friendly to France, an alliance might be formed against her between these two dukes, the Archduke Charles, now King of Spain, and his father, the Emperor Leopold, an alliance which would encircle France with a line of hostile Powers from Austria to Spain itself. But the Duke of Savoy might be induced to exchange his territories for Naples and Sicily; the Milanese might never be given up to the Duke of Lorraine. In any case, it was much to the advantage of France that the Milanese should no longer be in Spanish hands; while as long as France controlled the Mediterranean a union of the forces of Austria and Spain would be always difficult.

On the other hand, if the will were accepted, and the Duke of Anjou secured the whole of the Spanish Empire, Louis must abandon the hopes he had so long cherished of annexing the Spanish Netherlands and of directly extending his power in Italy. Nor could it be predicted with any certainty that the new King of Spain would be able or even willing to remain faithful to the French Alliance. Against such a policy the pride of the Spaniards might well revolt, especially when they recalled the losses they had suffered of late at the hands of France.

That Louis was not blind to these considerations is proved by his hesitation on hearing the purport of the will, and by the anxious counsel which he took with his chief advisers. Finally, however, he listened to the opinion of those who urged the acceptance of the will, and wrote a despatch to William III. explaining the reasons for thus repudiating the Partition Treaty. His arguments had great force. War, he held, was inevitable in either case. If he adhered to the treaty, Austria and Spain at least would fight, and might well gain other allies. How could he be sure that Holland and England would support him? In England at least the second Partition Treaty had been intensely disliked because it gave the command of the Mediterranean and its commerce to France, and William was daily becoming more unpopular on those and other grounds. The English had cried for a reduction of the Army, and loudly declared that they were being sacrificed to the personal and the Dutch interests of their King, and William himself acknowledged that the English preferred the will to the treaty. On the other hand, if Louis had to fight to place his grandson on the Spanish throne, he would at least be supported by the national enthusiasm of the Spanish fighting against the dismemberment of their empire. Moreover, as he reminded William III., the acceptance of the will would cause less apprehension to Europe. France herself would gain nothing, and would be prevented from any encroachment on the Spanish Netherlands.

Louis XIV.  
accepts the  
will of  
Charles II.

So forcible did these arguments appear, that England and Holland declared their willingness to acknowledge Philip of Anjou as King of Spain, if he would consent to cede the Italian possessions in Italy to the Archduke Charles, allow the barrier fortresses to be still garrisoned by the Dutch, and grant the same commercial privileges to the Dutch and the English in the Indies as should be given to France.

These were, it is interesting to note, practically the terms to which France and Spain were forced to accede at the end of the war. Had, therefore, Louis accepted them now, Europe might have been saved from thirteen years of carnage, and France would have had time to restore her finances and alleviate the misery of her people. Spain, though she would have deeply resented the dismemberment of her empire, could not have fought alone. The Emperor would have been forced, though grudgingly, to comply. All, therefore, depended on the decision of France. But the ambition of Louis had now been stirred again. His answer to these proposals was to reserve the rights of Philip of Anjou to the French throne, to seize the barrier fortresses, to throw an army into Italy, and to show that he intended to secure for France exclusive commercial privileges not only in the Mediterranean but in the Indies.

Holland and England, threatened not only by the danger of a great Bourbon family compact, but in their trade, which was the mainspring of their life,

were determined to resist, and prevailed on the Emperor to sign a secret treaty, which subsequently was expanded into the Grand Alliance.

The allies declared as their aims the procuring of a reasonable satisfaction for the Emperor, and for the Dutch and English a guarantee for the safety of their respective countries and their commerce. To this end the Spanish Netherlands and the Spanish possessions in Italy must be conquered, and measures taken to prevent the Crowns of Spain and France from ever being united. The commercial privileges of Holland and of England in the Spanish dominions must be confirmed, France must not be allowed to acquire any of the Spanish West Indies or any trading rights there, and any conquests made there by the allies should be theirs. It is noticeable that in these terms there is no mention of the claim of the Emperor to the Spanish throne; indeed Philip of Anjou is by implication acknowledged. The war, therefore, was originally engaged in pursuit of the balance of Power and of the commercial interests of England and Holland. Louis, if he had been moderate in his demands, might have secured Spain for his grandson. This opportunity he had thrown away, and now, as if to show that he despised his adversaries, he made one more grave blunder. On the death of the exiled James II., he recognised his son the Pretender as King of England. By so doing he broke his promise made at Ryswick, and roused English feeling to fever heat. William III. became once more the nation's representative, and, although he was not permitted

The Grand Alliance,  
Sept. 1701

Primary object of the Allies

Louis acknowledges the Pretender, Sept. 1701



Death of  
William  
III.,  
Mar. 1702

to see the end of the struggle, he died with the full assurance that the war with his life-long enemy would be pursued with energy.

At the commencement of the war the combatants were not ill-matched. On the side of the allies stood England, Holland and Austria; the Elector Palatine; Frederick, the Elector of Brandenburg, bribed by the title of King of Prussia; and the Elector of Hanover; while shortly after the Imperial Diet was induced to declare war. Of these Powers, the energy of England depended mainly on whether the Tories or the Whigs would secure a majority; Holland was "a many-headed, headless" confederacy, whose attention was concentrated on the Netherlands, and who would not support the war elsewhere; Austria was much distracted by the troubles in Hungary, and weakened at home by divided counsels and an ill-organised executive; and the rest of Germany was chiefly valuable as a recruiting ground. On the other hand, Louis obtained the alliance of Maximilian, Elector of Bavaria; of his brother, the Archbishop and Elector of Cologne; and of Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy. These allies were of the greatest value. The Duke of Savoy could open the Alpine passes from France to Piedmont; Cologne gave him a strong position on the Lower Rhine, close to Holland itself; while Bavaria afforded an indispensable basis for an attack on Vienna. The Spanish Netherlands, which had been occupied before the war broke out, formed, with its numerous fortresses, a barrier which could only be forced with

difficulty, as well as a constant menace to Holland. In Spain, the French cause was certainly the most popular, while at home the concentration of all power in the royal hands should have made for military effectiveness and despatch.

Favoured by these advantages, as in the previous wars, France was at first, on the whole, successful. In Italy, where the Emperor claimed the possessions of Charles II. as lapsed fiefs, the war had broken out before the formation of the Grand Alliance. Here Prince Eugène, after beating back the French to the line of the Adda and taking prisoner Villeroi himself, was forced for want of due support to drop back behind the Adige (August, 1702). Meanwhile Marlborough, Captain-general of Holland and commander-in-chief of the allied armies in the north, by seizing a line of fortresses from Venlo on the Meuse to Bonn on the Rhine, secured his communications with Germany (1702-May, 1703). Nevertheless, owing to the unwillingness of the Dutch to co-operate in an offensive attack, he was unable to make any impression on the French position in the Netherlands.

Thus in the year 1703, Louis was able to develop his main attack on Vienna. In February, Villars crossed the Rhine at Strasburg, masked the position of Louis of Baden at Stolhofen, forced the passes of the Black Forest, and joined the Elector of Bavaria on the Upper Danube. In Italy, Vendôme pushed Prince Eugène up the Adige, and over the Brenner Pass to Innsbruck. A bold advance on Vienna might

Campaigns  
in Italy  
and in the  
Nether-  
lands,  
1702-1703

French  
advance on  
Vienna,  
Feb. 1703

Duke of  
Savoy  
abandons  
French  
alliance

have ended the war, but such a plan, though urged by Villars, was rejected by the Elector as too hazardous until Eugène had been dislodged from Innsbruck. This the Elector attempted, and the Prince was in danger of being caught between his troops and those of Vendôme, who were pressing north. At this moment the defection of the Duke of Savoy, who with the selfish foresight so characteristic of his house, had determined to join the allies, forced Vendôme to retire to the Milanese, and the Elector threatened by Eugène and the Tyrolese, who rose in defence of the House of Habsburg, dropped back on Bavaria.

Höchstadt,  
Sept. 1703

Villars, however, had meanwhile defeated Louis of Baden at Höchstadt, near Blenheim, and had driven him back to Stollhofen, when the approach of winter put an end to the campaign and Villars was superseded by Marsin, a very inferior soldier, an act of incredible folly on the part of the French Government. Next year (1704) the French advanced again, while Ragotski, the Hungarian rebel, threatened Vienna from the east. At this moment the whole fortune of the war was changed by the military insight and decision of the English general Marlborough.

Campaign  
of  
Blenheim,  
Summer,  
1704

Realising the desperate situation of Austria, he determined to leave his position on the lower Rhine, and to hurry to the assistance of Prince Eugène and of Louis of Baden.

To do this, it was necessary to deceive not only the French, then under Villeroy in the Netherlands,

but his Dutch allies themselves, who would certainly have forbidden a movement which might leave them exposed alone to a French attack. Accordingly Marlborough, publicly announcing his intention of turning the French position and of threatening France by the way of the Moselle, instructed the Dutch to protect his right at Maestricht.

On reaching Coblenz (June, 1704), he suddenly changed his course, and ordering the Brandenburg contingent to accompany him, advanced by forced marches to Mainz. Thence, leaving the Rhine, he joined Prince Eugène at Ulm, on the Danube, seized Donauworth, and drove the French under Marsin and the Elector of Bavaria on Augsburg. He had thus forced himself between the two French armies, yet his position was most critical. Villeroy, now aware of his move, pressed south and joined Tallard at Stollhofen. This enabled Tallard to unite his forces with those of Marsin and the Elector at Augsburg, leaving Villeroy to oppose Eugène, who had been detached for the purpose.

The united forces of the enemy now far outnumbered those of the allies. Yet Marlborough determined to strike at once before they could unite, and ordered Eugène to neglect Villeroy and to concentrate on Donauworth. His enemy played into his hands. Believing that they could easily overwhelm him, they rashly accepted his challenge without waiting for Villeroy. In the battle which ensued, Battle of Blenheim, Aug. 10, 1704 Marlborough, with his keen eye for position, directed his main attack on the centre where the enemy did

not expect him. Piercing it, he hemmed Tallard between him and the Danube and forced him to surrender with all his infantry. Marsin and the Elector fled through the Black Forest to Villeroy at Stohofen, pursued by Prince Eugène.

From that moment Vienna was safe, and France was never again able to take the offensive in Germany.

Alteration  
in the  
objects of  
the Allies

Methuen  
Treaty,  
May, 1703.  
Portugal  
joins the  
Allies

Meanwhile the character of the war had changed. In the original terms of the Grand Alliance no mention had been made of the Emperor's claim to the throne of Spain, and Philip of Anjou had for three years been left undisturbed. But in May, 1703, the King of Portugal was induced by the favourable tariff offered by the English on all port wine imported into England to join the allies, on condition that the Spanish throne should go to the Archduke Charles, a condition which suited England because she believed that her commercial interests would be safer under a Habsburg than a Bourbon. The Emperor consented, though unwillingly, to surrender his claim to his younger son, and in 1704 the Archduke went to Spain, accompanied by a Dutch and English force. The change of policy was unfortunate. The national pride of the Spaniards revolted at this attempt to force the unpopular Habsburg on them. Charles was never received elsewhere than in Catalonia. The English and Portuguese, under Galway, indeed penetrated to Madrid in 1706, but had to retreat, and when he renewed the attempt in 1707 he was completely crushed by Berwick at Almanza.

The chief advantage was reaped by England. In August, 1704, Rooke seized Gibraltar and England gained command of the entrance to the Mediterranean. Gibraltar seized, Aug. 4, 1704

When Eugène had by his brilliant victory at Turin in September, 1706, secured the north of Italy for the allies, and a revolt in Naples had forced the French to evacuate that kingdom, the presence of the English force effectually prevented any attempt to recover these possessions. The English took Sardinia and Minorca in August, 1708, and Italy was finally lost to the French. French lose Italy, 1706

It was, however, in the Netherlands that the decisive campaigns were to be fought. Progress in that quarter was difficult. The numerous fortresses prevented rapid advance; the Dutch, chiefly intent on defending their own country from invasion, were dilatory and inconstant, while the attention of Austria and the Empire was distracted by the death of the Emperor Leopold I., and the election of his son, Joseph I. Nevertheless, during that year, Marlborough succeeded in pushing up the Meuse nearly as far as Namur, and defeated the incapable and boastful Villeroy at Ramillies, which lies at the source of the Gheet, a tributary of the Demer, and, having thus completely turned the flank of the French, forced them to evacuate Brussels, and to fall back on the frontier fortresses to the west. Campaign in the Netherlands  
Death of Leopold, May, 1750.  
Joseph I. elected Emperor  
Battle of Ramillies, May 23, 1706

At this moment his operations were checked by a threatened diversion from the north-east. Charles XII. of Sweden, who had defeated Peter the Great

at Narva in 1700, had turned aside to drive Augustus of Saxony from his Polish throne, and to set up his own candidate, Stanislas Leszczinski. In his camp in Altranstadt he had just received the submission of Augustus, and was now listening to the solicitations of Louis XIV., who urged him to come to his aid.

Marlborough visits Charles XII. at Altranstadt, Sept. 1707

But Marlborough, who was as skilled in diplomacy as he was in war, visited the Swedish conqueror, conciliated him by concessions extorted from the Emperor with regard to the Protestants in Silesia, and, seeing a map of Russia on the table, convinced himself that Charles was too intent on his Russian schemes to intervene in the West.

Charles XII. defeated at Pultawa, July 8, 1709

In September, 1707, the Swedish King left his camp on the fatal campaign, which was to end at Pultawa in 1709, and Marlborough was free to continue his campaign in the Netherlands.

Battle of Oudenarde, July 11, 1708

There Vendôme, who had replaced the "exploded balloon," as St. Simon calls Villeroy, had once more reoccupied some of the Flemish towns, notably Ghent and Bruges, and had laid siege to Oudenarde, on the Upper Scheldt. But the presence of the young Duke of Burgundy, the grandson of Louis XIV., who had been placed in chief command, led to divided counsels; and Marlborough, with the assistance of his old comrade-in-arms, Eugène, was able, though with difficulty, to win the battle which led to the final evacuation of the Netherlands by the French. In October, 1708, Marlborough took the important fortress of Lille, and

Mons and Namur alone remained to stay his advance into the heart of France.

France was now in the last extremity. On all sides, except in Spain, she had been defeated. <sup>Exhausted condition of France</sup> She had lost Italy and the Netherlands, her position on the Rhine was seriously threatened, and there seemed small chance of arresting the advance of the allies on Paris. Her best armies were no more, and her resources were exhausted. No further taxes could be imposed, or loans raised, and though many offices were created to be sold, this was a policy which could not be long pursued. Nature herself seemed to conspire against her, for the winter of 1708-1709 was so severe that the fastest rivers froze, and even trees were split by the intensity of the cold. Her proud King bowed before the hand of Providence, and reopening negotiations which he had already attempted in 1706 after the defeat of Ramillies, offered the most humiliating conditions. <sup>Louis' offer refused</sup> Lille, Tournay, Ypres and other towns should be ceded to the Dutch, Strasburg should be restored to the Empire; Newfoundland should be ceded to England, and France should cease to demand either Italy or Spain for Philip. The allies, however, raised their terms and finally insisted that Louis should himself use his forces to beat his grandson out of Spain.

No King with any sense of self-respect could submit to such conditions. Louis, after vainly attempting to influence Marlborough by bribes, refused, and appealed to the patriotism of his people.



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He was not disappointed. Volunteers arose to defend their country, rich and poor poured in their contributions, and a fresh army was collected. Yet even this supreme effort seemed doomed, for at *Malplaquet*, Villars was defeated by Marlborough and Eugène, and the fortresses of Mons fell. Once more at *Gettruydenberg*, in the winter of 1709-1710, Louis offered peace. He offered to surrender Alsace and furnish supplies for the allied armies in Spain. The allies, however, insisted on their previous terms, and the negotiations broke down.

*Mal-*  
*plaquet,*  
*Sep. 11,*  
*1709*

But the enemy had overshot their mark. In the year 1710, Spain herself arose, and showed that she would not have a Habsburg King. A Spanish army, led by Vendôme, beat back the allies from Madrid, and driving its way between Stanhope and Stahremberg, forced the first to surrender at Brihuega, and after defeating the second at Villa Viciosa pushed him back on Barcelona in Catalonia.

*Battle of*  
*Brihuega,*  
*Dec. 10,*  
*and of Villa*  
*Viciosa*  
*Dec. 20,*  
*1710*

France was now to be saved by the jealousies of her enemies, and by the party factions of the English. In England the Whigs, who had been in power since 1705, fell (August, 1710), and the Tories under Harley and St. John came in shortly after. An intrigue, which was connected with the party strife, led to the dismissal of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough from the court, and of Marlborough himself from his command.

*The Tories*  
*come into*  
*power,*  
*Aug. 10*

*Marlbor-*  
*ough dis-*  
*missed,*  
*Dec. 1711*

With the Tories the war of late had become most unpopular. They were the little Englanders of the day, and had long been declaring that England had

small interest in the Spanish question, while some of them were hoping to restore the Pretender, and were therefore inclined to favour France, where he had found a refuge. Secret negotiations with France had already been commenced, in which England promised to desert her allies as soon as her trade interests were secured, when the Emperor Joseph died and the Archduke Charles, the Habsburg claimant, succeeded to the hereditary dominions in Austria, and was elected Emperor.

Death of  
Joseph I,  
April, 1711  
Archduke  
Charles  
elected,  
Dec. 1711

By this event, the situation was entirely altered, and the arguments for peace were strengthened. The war, the Tories asserted, and with justice, had not been originally fought to drive the French candidate from his Spanish throne, but to preserve the balance of power, and to safeguard the commercial interests of the maritime Powers. The latter might be gained by treaty, while the former would be better attained by demanding a guarantee that the crowns of France and Spain should never be united, and by securing the Italian possessions for the Emperor, than by giving him the whole of the Spanish dominions, and thus reviving the formidable empire of the great Charles V., when Habsburg ruled in Germany and in Spain. After-events conclusively proved the truth of this contention, and the desire of the Tories to end the war must therefore be commended. Nevertheless, party faction led them to extremes, as we may read in Swift's powerful pamphlet *The Conduct of the Whigs*. The war was denounced as one continued in the interest not of

the Prince or people but in that of Marlborough, the Whigs and the moneyed class who grew fat on the loans that had been raised ; a war in which her allies were to have the whole profit, while England, the dupe and bubble of Europe, was to bear a double share of the burden.

Influenced by such sentiments as these, the Tories continued negotiations for peace without consulting their allies, and actually instructed the Duke of Ormond, who had succeeded to Marlborough's command, not to hazard any battle without further orders ; an order which though known to the enemy was not communicated to Prince Eugène.

England  
withdraws,  
July, 1712

Victories  
of Villars

On 17th July, 1712, England finally withdrew from the war. The allies, justly indignant at this conduct, still fought on. But Eugène, deprived of the help of English troops, and of Marlborough's advice and leadership, was no match for the energy and dash of Villars. Declaring that no time should be lost in preparing fascines, since the bodies of those first slain would serve to fill the ditch, the French general stormed the camp of Denain, 24th July, retook the fortresses of Douai, Le Quesnoy and Bouchain (September-October), which had been lost in the summer.

The Dutch now came to terms, and in April, 1713, the peace was signed at Utrecht by all but Austria. The obstinate determination of the Emperor to continue the struggle enabled Villars to continue his successes. Landau was retaken, Spire and even Freiburg on the German side of the Rhine were

occupied (August-November, 1713), and Austria, bowing to the inevitable, signed the Treaty of Rastadt on 7th March, 1714, which was confirmed by the Diet six months later.

The terms of the various treaties, which are included in the Peace of Utrecht, were as follows :— Peace of  
Utrecht,  
April, 1713

1. Philip was acknowledged King of Spain and the Indies, on condition that the crowns of France and Spain should never be united.

2. Naples, Sardinia, Milan and the Netherlands were given to the Emperor, and Sicily to the Duke of Savoy.

3. The Elector of Brandenburg was to be acknowledged King of Prussia, and was given Spanish Guelderland.

4. England received Gibraltar and Minorca from Spain ; and from France Newfoundland (subject to certain fishing rights reserved by France), Acadia, Nova Scotia and Hudson Bay. She also secured a preferential tariff for her imports into the port of Cadiz, the monopoly of the slave trade, and the right of sending one ship of merchandise a year to the Spanish colonies.

5. The Dutch were to have the right of garrisoning the following towns on the west side of the Netherlands as a barrier against France : Furnes, Ypres, Menin, Ghent, Tournay, Mons, Charleroi, Namur, and for this purpose were to receive financial support from Austria. They were also to be allowed to close the Scheldt to all trade without their permission.

6. France was to acknowledge George I. as King of England, and to promise not to restore the fortifications of Dunkirk.

It will be well to note the chief changes in the European situation which had been effected since the opening of the struggle. The Peace of Utrecht finally closed the long series of wars which had been caused by the ambition of Louis XIV. By the peace, the rule of the Habsburg in Spain, which

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**Position of Europe** dated from the beginning of the sixteenth century, came to an end, and henceforth till our own day the crown has been worn by a French Bourbon prince. On this point Louis XIV. had gained his end, and the will of Charles II. was confirmed. The old mon-

**Spain** archy of Spain, though it retained its possessions in the new world, had to acquiesce in the French occupation of Franche Comté, and to surrender its Italian dominions and the Netherlands to the Habsburg in Austria.

**Austria** Whether these acquisitions by Austria were a fair equivalent for the loss of Alsace may well be questioned. For their inhabitants did not speak her language; they lay at some distance from her true centre of gravity, and served only to unfit her for the leadership of the empire. Henceforth the Habsburgs devoted themselves to the pursuit of Austrian rather than German interests. Thus the way was prepared for Brandenburg, now King of Prussia, to occupy the position they were abdicating.

**Holland** The Dutch Republic secured the trade of the Scheldt, and obtained a barrier against French aggression. But she made no fresh conquests from this moment; she ceased to be a first-rate power and was forced to follow the lead of England.

**England** England was no doubt the chief gainer. She had finally thrown off her Stuart kings, who had made her the paid adherent of France. Gibraltar and Minorca, with its harbour of Port Mahon, formed a basis for her future naval supremacy in the Mediterranean; Newfoundland, and her conquests on the

mainland of North America, for a future attack on Canada. Although she had not made such use of her navy as she might have done, yet she came out of the war the mistress of the sea and with valuable commercial privileges.

The Duke of Savoy had gained Sicily what a Savoy royal title, and was left in the possession of Piedmont, which gave him a position of great importance in any future struggle between Habsburg and Bourbon.

France herself, chiefly owing to the dissensions of France her enemies, escaped from the war on much better terms than she had any reason to expect. Although all chance of her dominating Europe was over, she lost nothing on the continent which she had gained in the previous wars of Louis' reign except a few towns on the east frontier. She retained Artois and most of Flanders, Valenciennes and Cambrai, Alsace and Franche Comté, as well as Cerdagne and Roussillon on the Spanish frontier; and the importance of these acquisitions was great. Her position in America was still magnificent. She held Canada and the island of Cape Breton in the north, Louisiana and many West Indian islands in the south. And if her military prestige had suffered in the last war, it had been partially restored by the last campaign of Villars. If, therefore, we look at external results, we must admit that the warlike policy of the King had met with brilliant success.

At home, however, the price had been a heavy one. Opinions will always differ on the question whether a strong centralised administration under a despotic

king was the best form of government for France at that time. But no one can doubt that the centralisation to be successful should at least have been complete, and established on a sound financial basis. The long series of wars had done much to check completeness, and, added to the reckless extravagance of the King in building his new palace at Versailles and other royal palaces,<sup>1</sup> had ruined the finances. The problem of the future was, whether the necessary reforms would be carried out, whether the abuses in the central government would be abolished, and the survivals which marred its efficiency would be removed; whether the nobles could be weaned from their idleness and made to abandon their harmful privileges, and whether finally, the country could be saved from bankruptcy.

In any case the result of this absolute rule was in one way evil. By the weakening of local government the people lost that political education which the enjoyment of self-government provides, and all individuality and independence of thought were dwarfed.

Persecution  
of the  
Jansenists

To this last result the religious policy of Louis XIV. contributed. Not satisfied with the expulsion of the Huguenots, the King in his later years insisted on uniformity within the Church, and took severe measures against the Jansenists. This party, so called from their founder, Jansen, Bishop of Ypres in the seventeenth century, may be called the Low Church party within the Church of Rome. They

<sup>1</sup> Versailles alone cost £24,000,000, and could house 10,000 persons.

adopted Luther's doctrine of justification by faith rather than by works, as held by their great opponents the Jesuits. They also accused the Jesuits of insisting too strongly on the importance of the intention of the mind in estimating the criminality of an act, and of maintaining that "the end justifies the means"; in other words, that for a good object one may break the moral law. That the views of the Jesuits if pressed too far are dangerous is true enough; yet it must be acknowledged that there is truth after all in the main contention of the Jesuits, that the criminality of an act does depend to a great extent on the aim and intention of the doer, and that if we once admit, as the Jansenists themselves did, the desirability of the confessional, some system of casuistry<sup>1</sup> is necessary to its working.

Moreover, if undue insistence on the efficacy of works tends to impair the necessity of Christ's Redemption, overmuch dependence on the opposite doctrine may lead to the belittling of a good life, since, if we are to be saved by faith alone, where is the need of works at all? It must also be acknowledged that the Jansenists threatened to become a political party, and were critics of the Government of the day. Nevertheless, among their numbers were to be found some of the best Frenchmen of the time, and the destruction of their famous educational seminary and literary society at Port Royal in 1710, and the extortion from the Pope, Clement XIV., of the Bull *The Bull Unigenitus*,<sup>1</sup> par-Sep. 1718

<sup>1</sup>Casuistry is the application of general moral rules to particular cases.



*Unigenitus* in 1713, by which all Jansenist opinions were condemned, were the last fatal deeds of the absolute monarch.

Last  
days of  
Louis XIV.  
His death,  
Sep. 1, 1715

Louis XIV. did not long survive the peace. His last days were clouded with domestic grief. In 1712 the Duke of Burgundy, his grandson, and the duke's wife and eldest son succumbed to fever. The Duke, Louis XIV. who had been Dauphin since the death of his worthless father Louis in 1711, though by nature a boy of ungovernable passion, insatiable appetite and arrogance, had so profited by the teaching of Fénelon, one of the best and most interesting of the French Churchmen of the day, that many looked forward to a new era under his beneficent rule. France, however, was not destined to be governed by a prince "already ripe for a blessed eternity". After the Duke's death the heir to the Crown, the future Louis XV., was a weakly child, who was not expected to live, and the regency was, by the wish of Louis XIV., left to a Council of Regency, under the presidency of his nephew, the indolent and immoral Philip, Duke of Orleans.

The last words of the dying King to his young grandson form a terrible comment on his long reign of seventy-two years, the longest reign in the annals of France. "Do not imitate my love for building and for war, and assuage the misery of my people." The great monarch had indeed raised France to an unexampled pitch of glory, but the consequence at home had been ruinous. His successors forgot his warning, and brought by their follies evil days on the country which Louis had loved well indeed, but not altogether wisely.

## CHAPTER IV

### NORTH AND EASTERN EUROPE

WHILE the question whether France should dominate Western Europe was being fought out, a similar problem was engaging attention in the North-East. At the Peace of Westphalia, Sweden seemed not unlikely to make herself the predominant power there, and to turn the Baltic into a Swedish lake. Before the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, she had already gained from Russia the eastern shore as far south as Livonia, which belonged to Poland, and during that war had not only won from Denmark the island of Gothland and the province of Halland in pawn, but had gained free passage without toll for her ships through the Sound.<sup>1</sup> By the Peace of Westphalia itself, she was admitted a member of the Empire, and received the town and district of Wismar, all Pomerania west of the Oder, and the command of the mouths of that river, as well as the Archbishopric of Bremen, and the Bishopric of Verden on the river Weser.

<sup>1</sup>The Sound is the narrow passage between the island of Zealand, on which Copenhagen stands, and the province of Scania, then belonging to Denmark.

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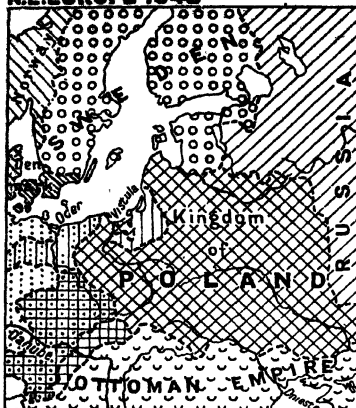
To understand the events which followed, it is necessary to study the map and grasp the situation of the other Powers concerned.

To the south of Sweden lay Denmark, which still held the southern provinces on the Swedish mainland and stretched along the Baltic as far as the Duchy of Mecklenburg. Then came Wismar and Western Pomerania which Sweden had just gained.

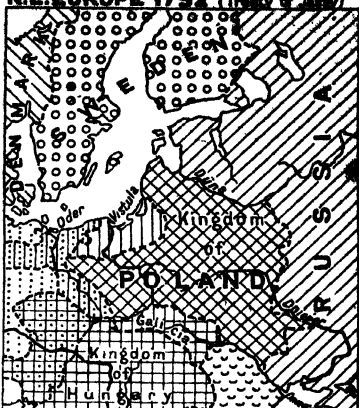
East of the Oder, we first come to Eastern Pomerania, which had been adjudged to the Elector of Brandenburg at the Peace of Westphalia. Further to the east lay Western Prussia, which belonged to Casimir, King of Poland; then Eastern Prussia, between the rivers Vistula and Niemen, which Brandenburg held as a fief of Poland; next Courland, also a fief of Poland under its Duke, and finally Livonia, which Poland possessed in full sovereignty, and which marched with Esthonia, the furthest limit of Swedish territory on the south-eastern shore of the Baltic.

The chief Powers, therefore, interested in the question of the Baltic, were Sweden, Denmark, Brandenburg, Poland and Russia. Of these, Denmark had been steadily declining, since Sweden had broken away and declared her independence under the House of Vasa, 1523, while Poland, once under the powerful House of Jagellon, the most formidable kingdom in the north-east, was, under an elective King, John Casimir (1648-1669), rapidly falling a victim to an anarchical constitution, and to nobles who knew not how to obey, or to treat their serfs as human beings.

# N.E. EUROPE 1648



# N.E. EUROPE 1792 (Treaty of Jassy)



The Empire [horizontal lines] Prussia [vertical lines] House of Habsburg [cross-hatch] Ottoman Empire [dotted] [diagonal lines] [diagonal lines]

# N.E. EUROPE



**Russia** On the other hand Russia, under Alexis (1645-1676) of the new house of Romanoff, which had secured the throne in 1613, was beginning to recover the country, which in earlier days had been wrested from her by the Turks on the South, and the Poles on the West, and was laying the foundations for the future reforms of Peter the Great (1689-1725). While **Brandenburg**, under the great Hohenzollern Elector, Frederick William (1640-1688) had already started on that career of conquest, and of internal consolidation, which was to culminate in the reign of Frederick the Great (1740-1786).

Neither Russia nor Brandenburg, however, were as yet in a position to oppose Sweden alone, and were quarrelling with each other. Now or never was the moment for Sweden to pursue the advantage already gained, and to complete the conquest of the Baltic shore. This was the aim of Charles X., who **Charles X. of Sweden, 1654-1660** in 1664 succeeded, on the abdication of that interesting though somewhat erratic personality, Christina. Seizing, therefore, the pretext that his title to the Swedish throne was disputed by John Casimir, King of Poland,<sup>1</sup> who at that moment was disputing with Russia for the possession of Livonia and the country about Kiev, he obtained from the Elector of Brandenburg free passage for his troops through Eastern Pomerania. Two successful campaigns in 1655-56, brought Poland to his feet, and, had the Tzar Alexis

<sup>1</sup> Casimir's father Sigismund III., had also been the heir to the Swedish throne but had been rejected because he was a Roman Catholic, 1604.

listened to his offer to divide the kingdom of Poland between them, the ambitious schemes of Charles X. might have been realised, and Sweden might have ruled the North.

If, further, an alliance had been formed between the victorious Swedish King and the young Louis XIV., an event by no means impossible considering the friendly relations between the two Crowns, France and Sweden might have dominated Europe.

Alexis, however, declined the offer, and made peace with Casimir of Poland. Frederick William, the Great Elector, and Frederick III. of Denmark joined their League, which also secured the support of the Emperor, and Charles found himself opposed to a powerful combination of all those whose jealousies and fears he had aroused. The King of Sweden, however, was not easily dismayed. Crossing over to the mainland of Denmark in depth of winter, and seizing the town of Friedericksodde (1657-58), he passed the Little and the Great Belts on the ice, laid siege to Copenhagen, and forced the King of Denmark to submit. Charles was now preparing to attack the Elector of Brandenburg in East Prussia, when England and Holland, finding their commercial interests injured by this Baltic struggle, induced France to join them in intervening to re-establish peace. A meeting was held at The Hague in May, 1659. The death of the Swedish King facilitated the negotiations, and the regency, which succeeded to power, concluded the Treaty of Oliwa, near Danzig, with the Elector and the King

League  
against  
Charles X.,  
1657

Death of  
Charles X.,  
1660.  
Feb. 13,  
Accession  
of Charles  
XI.

of Poland, that of Copenhagen with Denmark, and that of Kardis with the Tzar.

Treaty of Oliva, May 1660; of Copenhagen, June, 1660; and of Kardis, 1661

Treaty of Oliva.—(1) Sweden to hold the northern part of Livonia; (2) Brandenburg to hold East Prussia in full sovereignty.

Treaty of Copenhagen.—(1) Denmark to cede the districts of Bohus, Halland, Scania and Bleking (i.e., all that Denmark had hitherto held on the mainland of Sweden); (2) the Sound to be closed to all except Danish and Swedish ships.

Treaty of Kardis.—(1) Sweden to retain her previous conquests in Russia (Carelia, Ingria, Esthonia); (2) Russia abandons to Poland all claims on Southern Livonia.

Sweden had thus driven Denmark from her soil, and extended her conquests on the eastern shore of the Baltic by the acquisition of Northern Livonia. But on the southern coast she had made no advance, while Brandenburg, henceforth her most dangerous rival in that quarter, had, by securing the full sovereignty of Prussia, freed herself from foreign interference.

For eleven years the tranquillity of the North was undisturbed, save for a war between the Tzar Alexis and Casimir of Poland, which ended by the cession to Russia of Kiev, Smolensk and the right bank of the Dnieper, at the peace of Andrussovo, 1667. Meanwhile changes in the internal condition of the four northern kingdoms took place, some of which were to have a profound influence on their future fortunes. In all these countries the struggle between aristocracy and monarchy, through which all nations have passed at some period of their history, was at that moment to be found in its acutest form, and in every case, except in that of Poland, the cause of

Internal  
politics  
of the  
Northern  
Kingdoms

monarchy prevailed, while even there the energy of her military King, John Sobieski (1674-96), increased the personal prestige of the Crown.

In 1661, Frederick III. of Denmark, profiting by Denmark the discontent caused by the late ill success against the Swedes, succeeded in overthrowing the nobility, who had hitherto monopolised the Government, while they claimed exemption from taxation. The Crown was declared hereditary; the capitulation or charter which the King had hitherto been forced to sign as a price of his election was annulled, and the privileges of the nobility abolished. In Sweden, where the Sweden Constitution was originally very similar, the monarchy had to wait. Under the rule of the Regency, which governed during the minority of Charles XI., the nobles returned to power, and the Crown was impoverished by lavish grants to them out of the royal lands.

In Brandenburg, a far more complicated task lay Brandenburg before the Great Elector. The Hohenzollerns, originally Counts of a small district in the Suabian Jura, had been Burgraves of Nuremberg in the Middle Ages. Thence, at the close of the fifteenth century, they had moved north; and by grant, by succession, and by conquest, had collected under their hand a number of territories, which fell roughly into three groups.<sup>1</sup> In the centre stood the Electoral Mark of Brandenburg, which gave

<sup>1</sup> The districts in Suabia and Franconia, that is, Hohenzollern, and the country round Nuremberg (Anspach and Bairreuth) went to younger branches.

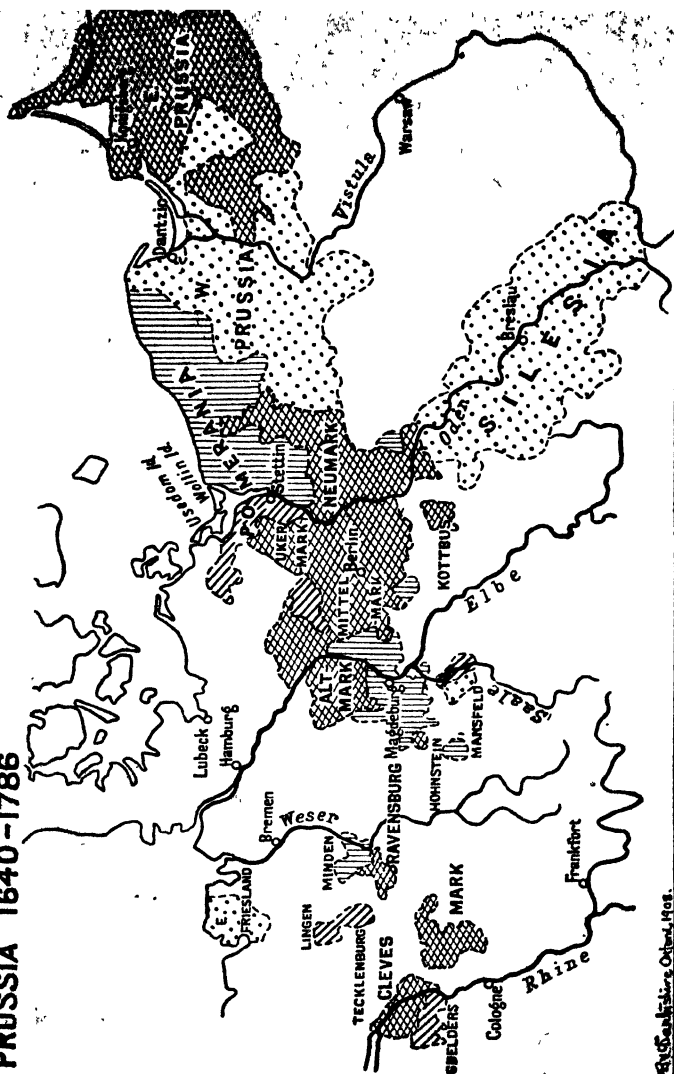


Frederick William his seat in the electoral chamber of the Imperial Diet. To this had been added the New Mark in the sixteenth century, and, by the Peace of Westphalia, Magdeburg and Halberstadt on the Elbe, Eastern Pomerania, and the Bishopric of Minden on the Weser. Then came the Duchy of East Prussia, held as a fief of Poland. Thirdly, the Duchies of Cleves and the Mark on the Rhine near Cologne.

These three groups were isolated from each other. The peoples who inhabited them were not of the same race. Those in the centre and the west were German, while Pomerania and East Prussia were largely Slav. They had no bond of union except the personal connection with their ruler. He held his possessions by different titles. Each had their separate "Estates" or assemblies, their laws and customs, and no native of one district could hold office in the other. The "Estates" were formed of feudal nobles, who were ignorant and obstructive, with great powers over their serfs. Finally the whole country was in a backward condition; its soil was for the most part unfruitful, and its industries few.

If Brandenburg was ever to advance to the dignity of a united State, and to be respected by her neighbours, it was essential that these scattered territories should be brought together. Yet the country was not yet ready for a united legislative assembly. The provincial differences were too great, the jealousies too deep. The only alternative lay in strengthening the personal authority of the Elector,

# PRUSSIA 1640-1786



By G. H. P. O. 1908.

Extent at accession of Great Elector 1640

Gains up to accession of Frederick the Great 1740

Gains during his reign (1640-1688)

Gains during his reign (1740-1786)

## 84 THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

Reforms of  
the Great  
Elector,  
1640-88

and in making him the pivot and mainspring of the Government. Leaving, therefore, the separate provincial assemblies or estates their ancient forms, the Elector proceeded gradually to circumscribe their powers, while he controlled the local administration by appointing the officials and by subordinating them to the central "Privy Council," in which the governors or "Stadholders" of the various provinces found seats beside the higher ministers. This Council, originally that of the Mark of Brandenburg alone, was now made a Board of Supervision over all the various provinces, and served as an advisory council to the Elector himself, though he still retained the right of ultimate decision on all important matters. The very want of unity facilitated his designs. The various provincial estates tried to oppose these measures, but in vain, and, deprived of the strength which union might have given, gradually submitted with murmurs of discontent.

A like policy was adopted towards the nobles. Afraid of arousing too great opposition, he left them their rights of manorial jurisdiction and of police, while he taught them to look to his service for advancement and for honour.

The whole system of taxation was revised. In the towns of the Mark an excise was substituted for the old house and land tax; the revenue was increased by import and export duties and by careful administration of the Elector's private domains, which were extensive, more especially in East Prussia.

Conscious that the weakness of his country was due to the scantiness of the population, to the sterility of the soil, and ignorance of improved methods of agriculture and of industry, he did his best to find a remedy. Colonies were planted, and, on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, a refuge was found for some 20,000 "nimble" Frenchmen, who taught the Brandenburgers how to turn their waste sands into profitable "potherb gardens". Manufactures and trade were encouraged, and canals cut, more especially the famous one which bears his name, and which, running between the Oder and the Spree, the tributary of the Elbe, connected the two great rivers of Brandenburg together. But this was not enough without an effective army. He therefore substituted for the ill-organised and insubordinate feudal array a standing army, levied partly by conscription and partly by pay, under officers of his own appointment, and placed the military organisation and finance under a separate department. These reforms were carried out gradually, indeed, but persistently, and in the pursuit of his end the Elector had little regard for traditional rights or for legality. Those who opposed his measures were, if unimportant, disregarded, and if formidable, removed. Thus Rhode, the burgomaster of Königsberg, was imprisoned for life; and when the Prussian noble, Kalkstein, dared to break his parole, he was seized, in violation of all international rights, on Polish ground and executed.

We may well demur to some of these methods;

but, if we consider the geographical and other peculiarities of the territories over which the Great Elector ruled, we shall probably agree with those who defend the aims of his home and foreign policy.

Battle of  
Fehrbellin,  
June, 1675

The results were soon to be seen. In 1672, Charles XI. joined Louis XIV. in his Dutch War, while Christian V. of Denmark and the Elector sided with the opposing coalition. The Swedish King was indeed victorious over the Danes, but was decisively beaten by the Elector at Fehrbellin when he was threatening Berlin. The defeat was significant. It was the first battle which the Swedes had lost since the days of Gustavus Adolphus, except where they had been overwhelmed by superior numbers. It showed therefore that the military power of Sweden was passing away, and at the Peace of Nimeguen, which followed in 1679, the intervention of his French ally alone enabled Charles to retain Eastern Pomerania.

For some twenty years, peace reigned on the shores of the Baltic, and when the struggle began again the scenes had shifted and new actors had come upon the stage.

In one way Sweden profited from her misfortunes. The disaster of Fehrbellin was laid to the charge of the regency, since the alliance with France had been their work, bribed, it was rumoured, by French gold; and Charles XI. who attained his majority in the same year (1675), taking advantage of the popular discontent, felt himself strong enough to revoke

many of the grants of royal lands, to overthrow the authority of the oligarchical Senate, and re-establish the personal authority of the Crown.

When, therefore, Charles XII. succeeded his father Accession of Charles XII., 1697 in 1697, Sweden was, so far as internal conditions went, somewhat better prepared for war. Moreover, the bent of the young King—he was only fifteen—was essentially military. Though not ill-educated, the only serious study for which he cared was that of military engineering. He preferred to read the history of Alexander the Great, whom he admired as the conqueror of the then known world at the age of thirty-two, and the Norse sagas which told of the heroic deeds of the Vikings of old. For the softer amusements, for wine, for gambling, even for the society of women he had no liking. He loved rather the most dangerous and violent sports: the pursuit on foot of the bear amid the winter snows, or wild nightly raids in the streets of Stockholm to the terror of the peaceful inhabitants.

The character of the man was well displayed in his features and in his dress. The abnormally high yet narrow forehead, the long and prominent aquiline nose, the pale thin face with steel blue eyes, portrayed the believer in predestination, the man of limited ideas, but of intense energy and pitiless determination; while his sombre-coloured coat, his short-cut hair devoid of the then fashionable wig, his high boots which he always wore, well fitted the warrior King.

One year previously, 1696, his future rival, Peter

Peter the  
Great,  
1698-1725

the Great, had finally risen to power. The period which preceded this event had been a troublous time for Russia. This was due partly to the measures Alexis, his father, had taken to strengthen the executive, partly to the reforms introduced by Nikon, the Patriarch of Moscow, in the ancient service books and ritual, so as to make them conform to those of the Greek church elsewhere.

The nobles were indignant at the first; the second led to the rise of the sect of the "old believers," who denounced Alexis as Anti-Christ, welcomed persecution, and in one district were fanatical enough to immolate themselves by a fire of their own lighting.

After the brief reign of Feodor, his eldest son, 1676-82, these troubles were intensified by the disputes about the succession. At first the two boys, Ivan, son of the first wife of Alexis, and Peter, the son of the second, were declared joint Tzars, with Sophia, the sister of Ivan, as regent. A female regent was unknown in Russia, and the whole arrangement was impossible. The partisans of the various parties intrigued for power, and the Streltsi,<sup>1</sup> who had got completely out of hand, sided now with one party, now the other. Murder and executions followed, and anarchy seemed likely to ensue. In 1689, however, the Regent Sophia was overthrown by the partisans of Peter, and the death of Ivan in 1696, left him the sole occupier of the throne at the age of twenty-five.

Peter sole  
ruler in  
Russia,  
1696

<sup>1</sup> The Streltsi were an hereditary caste of soldiers with special privileges, not unlike the Prætorian Guard in ancient Rome.

The character of the young Tzar, who was so profoundly to influence the future history of his country, was one of violent contradictions. A man of commanding stature and of a highly-coloured complexion, he had a broad and open countenance, though somewhat marred by a small and flat nose, eyes of piercing blackness, and a sunny smile when not in anger. He was simple, natural and straightforward; and at ordinary times, an attractive personality.

Nevertheless, his passions were under no control, and his passions were those of an animal. He was dirty in his personal habits. His appetite for food and spirits was insatiable, and he was often drunk for days. He was passionate, revengeful and cruel, and when his anger was aroused, often fell into epileptic fits. These purely animal qualities were, however, relieved by immense nervous energy, and by mental gifts of a high quality. To acute gifts of observation, and the power of mastering the minutest details of any subject he took up, he added a faculty of learning from experience, a brain receptive of new ideas and a genius for method and organisation.

In some ways his very contradictions well fitted him for his people and for his times. Russia needed a ruler of constructive power, and of far-reaching views, while his restless vigour, his disregard of scruples and his tyrannous ways suited a backward and uncivilised nation, accustomed to despotic rule, and demanding a master who would drive them along the path of progress.



Foreign  
policy of  
Peter

The aims of the foreign policy of Peter the Great centred round the chief interest of his youth: a love for the sea. When in 1689 he had overthrown his sister, the Regent Sophia, Russia had but one outlet at Archangel, on the White Sea, and that was of little use, since it was frozen during the winter months. It was therefore the dream of Peter to gain a footing on the shores of the Caspian Sea, the Black Sea, and the Baltic and to unite the waters of the Volga, the Don, the Dnieper, and the Neva, which run into these seas, by a series of canals. Thus he hoped to make Russia the highway of communication and of commerce between the south-east and north-west. To these schemes of foreign conquest was added the desire to stand forth as the representative of the Greek Church and the liberator of the Christians under the blasting rule of the infidel.

Already in 1696, he had taken a prominent part in the War of the Holy League, and had torn from the Moslem the possession of Azof on the sea of that name, itself an arm of the Black Sea. Peter, however, had always been more attracted by the West than by the East. From his earliest youth, he had admired, and tried to learn, all things Western, and the journey which he took through Western Europe in 1697, immediately after his accession to undisputed power, served to intensify this respect. To gain, therefore, the eastern shore of the Baltic, and thereby to "open a window" to western civilisation became henceforth the passion of his life, and shortly after his return an opportunity presented itself.

The Swedish rule in Livonia, which dated only from the Peace of Oliva, 1660, was distasteful at once to the German nobles, the descendants of the old crusading order of the Livonian knights, and to their Slavonian dependants. In the reign of Charles XI., their protests had been answered by the imprisonment of the ringleaders, in violation of a safe conduct. One of them, however, John Reinhold Patkul, had effected his escape, and was now seeking for aid to throw off the foreign yoke. The foes of Sweden listened to his appeal, and in 1699, a coalition was formed by Frederick IV. of Denmark, and Augustus, Elector of Saxony, who had been chosen King of Poland on the death of John Sobieski (1696), while Peter the Great himself promised to join as soon as the Turkish war was ended. The liberation of Livonia was the pretext, but the real aim of the League against Charles XII., Nov. 1699 was to conquer the Baltic possessions of the Swedish King and, on the part of Denmark, to gain Schleswig-Holstein, which belonged to a mother-in-law of Charles XII.

The war-loving Charles XII. readily accepted the challenge; and pouncing upon his opponents before they had time to unite, seemed likely to win an easy victory. Setting out for Copenhagen, he seized that town, while the King of Denmark was engaged in Holstein, and after a struggle of six weeks, Frederick IV. was forced to sue for peace (August, 1700).

Charles then sailed for the Gulf of Finland, and attacked the Russians as they were besieging the

Battle of  
Narva,  
Nov. 30,  
1700

town of Narva. Charles had but 8500 men, his opponents 40,000. But the Russian troops were ill-organised and raw. Peter was not present, the commander-in-chief, Le Croy, and many of the officers were German and unknown to their troops. On the first onslaught of the Swedes, the centre broke with the cry "the Germans are betraying us!" The general himself, saying that "the devil alone could command such troops," took refuge in the enemy's camp, and though the two wings fought bravely, they did not act together. The left wing capitulated before the sun went down, and the right wing in the morning. Charles now turned southwards, defeated the Saxons near Riga (July, 1701), occupied Courland, and pushing into Poland, seized Warsaw, May, 1702.

His wisest policy would now have been to concentrate his attack on the Russians, and to have strengthened his position in his own districts of Esthonia, Livia and Ingria, for Augustus, finding but scant support in Poland, would probably have come to terms. Charles was determined to deprive him of his Polish kingdom. He therefore rejected all overtures, and continued the war, in spite of having broken his leg by a fall from his horse. In July, 1703, the Polish Diet was forced to depose Augustus and to elect Stanislas Leszczinski, a Polish noble.

Now, at all events, Charles should have turned against the Tzar, who had taken advantage of his absence to occupy Karelia and Ingria. But Charles

was bent on humbling Augustus completely. He therefore marched into Saxony, violating by the way the neutrality of Silesia, which belonged to the Emperor, where he declared himself the protector of the Protestants against Austrian oppression, and finally dictated terms to the unfortunate Elector, at Altranstadt, 14th September, 1706.

Charles at  
Altran-  
stadt, Sep.,  
1706

Augustus (1) acknowledged Stanislas as King of Poland; (2) renounced the Russian alliance; (3) delivered Patkul to the vengeance of Charles XII., who had him broken on the wheel.

It was at this moment that Louis XIV., then in great straits owing to the disasters of the Spanish Succession War, sought the alliance of Charles. A more acute statesman might have listened. Had Charles thrown his weight into the Western struggle, Louis XIV. might yet have conquered his opponents, and then have rewarded the Swedish King by joining him against the Tzar.

Peter the Great could not resist the combined French and Swedish arms; Charles would at least have kept his own possessions, and France and Sweden might between them have dominated Europe. But Charles was no statesman, and declined the offer. Puffed up by his success he believed that he could crush his chief assailant, Peter, without other aid, and in September, 1707, he broke his camp to march eastwards.

Charles had now spent seven years since the victory of Narva, and these years had not been wasted by

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his foe. Taking advantage of the absence of the Swedish King, he had defeated the few troops left in the Eastern Baltic Provinces, strengthened his position there, and even laid the foundation of his future capital, St. Petersburg. Charles should therefore have directed his efforts to recover these dominions. Instead of that, he hoped to dictate terms in Moscow itself, and moved in that direction as far as Mohilef on the Dnieper. Peter, adopting the same tactics which were to ruin Napoleon I. in later times, retreated before him, contesting his advance where opportunity offered. Now, however, Charles stayed his course, and leaving part of his army under Lewenhaupt, turned southwards. He hoped to secure the aid of Mazeppa, the hetman or chief of the Cossacks on the Russian bank of the Dnieper, who was intriguing with both sides in the hope of thereby establishing his independence. The step was fatal. Charles had little difficulty in crushing Lewenhaupt, and drove back on the main army with the loss of 5000 men.

The Swedish army, reduced, was decimated by the severe winter of 1708-1709. When summer came at last, his generals urged Charles to retreat. But the foolhardy King declared that were an angel to command him he would refuse, and invested Pultawa, which was held by a Russian detachment, for "a diversion" as he said. Peter was now ready. Since the defeat at Narva he had been improving and organising his army, and training his soldiers in numerous petty conflicts. "We shall be often

Battle of  
Pultawa,  
July 8,  
1709

beaten," he had said, "but in time the Swedes will teach us how to beat them." The moment had now come. Reminding his troops that they fought not for the Tzar alone, but for their country and the Orthodox Church, he ordered the attack. The advantage was entirely on the Russian side. Charles had but 16,500 Swedes who were fit to fight (5000 more were sick), and 3000 Cossacks under Mazeppa, who could not be relied upon, and only four guns, while he himself had been wounded in the foot in a reconnaissance and had to be carried in a litter. Peter brought 44,000 troops and seventy-two cannons into the field. At the first onslaught indeed, the left wing of the Russians was driven back, but elsewhere the Russians stood firm, and finally the Swedes, overpowered by numbers and by the artillery fire, broke and fled. Eleven thousand were killed or taken prisoners, and, a few days after, 13,000 capitulated.

The Swedish army was annihilated. Charles himself was first thrown on a horse, but that was killed, and then into a carriage, but the horses were shot down. Finding another mount, he escaped with difficulty, and crossing the Dnieper took refuge in Turkish territory at Bender. There he remained, a half-willing captive, for five years, 1709-1714, which he for the most part spent in fruitless attempts to find allies.

Charles  
XII. at  
Bender,  
1709-1714

The Sultan was indeed induced to declare war on Russia, and in 1711 Peter, surrounded by a Turkish force, only escaped capitulation by bribing the Grand Vizier to grant him terms. Even so, he had to

Treaty of  
the Pruth,  
July, 1711

abandon the port of Azof and his grip on the Black Sea. The Sultan, satisfied with this important success, had neither the wish nor perhaps the power to do more. Meanwhile in the North, the results of Pultawa were far-reaching. Peter had little difficulty in finally securing the eastern Baltic shore, and Augustus of Saxony at once regained his Polish throne. Denmark again declared war, to be shortly joined by Frederick I. of Prussia, who was eager to secure Swedish Pomerania. When, therefore, in 1714 Charles at last returned from exile, he found himself opposed by a new and still more formidable coalition. In the following year, 1715, George, Elector of Hanover, and now King of England, joined the League, tempted by the offer of Bremen and Verden. Charles at last listened to advice, and, following the counsels of Goertz, a man of Holstein, his new-found Minister, he resorted to diplomacy. By ceding to Peter his Baltic acquisitions, he put an end to the war in that quarter, and there seemed a fair chance that Peter would help him against his other foes.

Death of  
Charles  
XII., Dec.  
1718, fol-  
lowed by  
alterations  
in the con-  
stitution

Whether this strange alliance would have lasted may well be doubted. In any case the death of the Swedish warrior King, as he was besieging a petty town in Norway, then a dependency of Denmark, decided the matter. His death was followed by a complete change of government in Sweden. As he left no son, the nobles were once more able to regain power. They elected his sister, Ulrica Eleonora, Queen, and, on her abdication in 1720, acknowledged her husband, Frederick of Hesse Cassel, and declared

the Crown hereditary. The royal authority was, however, practically destroyed. The Diet, composed of four benches or houses, the nobles, clergy, burghers and peasants, in which, however, the nobles had chief power, was allowed to meet without royal summons, and could not be dissolved without its own consent. The royal veto on legislation was abolished, and the legislative power of the Diet was unrestrained, save by the strange proviso that it could not by any measure increase the royal authority. The Diet also exercised supreme authority over the Administration while it sat, but at other times this lay with the Senate, nominated by the Crown out of a list presented by the Diet. In this Senate the King had two votes. For the rest his authority was restricted to signing orders issued by the Senate, while later, in 1756, the Ministers had printed forms of the sign manual, which they could affix to such orders at will.

No sooner had the aristocracy established their power on the ruins of the royal authority than they hastily made peace.

Sweden  
makes  
peace  
at Nystad,  
1721

To Hanover they surrendered Bremen and Verden; Denmark was allowed to rob the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein of his duchy; Prussia was given the mouth of the Oder; finally, by the Peace of Nystad, 1721, Sweden surrendered to Russia Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria and part of Karelia.

Of all the Baltic Provinces, Sweden only retained Finland, part of which she lost in 1743, and part of Western Pomerania, which she was to retain till 1815.



## 98. THE AGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED DESPOT

The great Northern war, which had thus lasted twenty-one years, profoundly affected the fortunes not only of the North but of Western Europe. Sweden had failed to make the Baltic a Swedish lake, and henceforth fell into the position of a third-rate Power. Poland, though she did not lose in territory, had been devastated by war and torn by the quarrels of the two parties; the rivalries remained, and Poland, the victim of faction and of anarchy, was rapidly declining. On the other hand, the Elector of Brandenburg, now King of Prussia, had secured the mouths of the Oder, one of the great commercial arteries of Northern Germany; and, more important than all, Russia had finally seated herself on the Baltic and had begun to influence Western politics.

Some would attribute the fall of Sweden to the rashness and want of statesmanship of Charles XII., others to the feeble and selfish policy of the oligarchical rule that followed. That Charles precipitated the catastrophe, or that the aristocrats intensified it, few would deny. Yet the causes of the decline of Sweden lie deeper, and the wonder is, not that Sweden fell, but that she did not fall before. The truth of the matter is, that the position held by Sweden since the days of Gustavus Adolphus had been an artificial one, due to temporary conditions and to the personal influence of her great kings. The Empire which she had attempted to weld together had no common bond of union either of race or institutions, of religion, or of sympathy. It

could, therefore, only be held by force, and this the geographical distribution of its parts made difficult. The foreign possessions formed a somewhat narrow circle, broken at several points, and with an enormous "hinterland" behind. Possibly it might have been based upon a powerful Baltic fleet, but the Swedes have never been a seafaring people. It was therefore inevitable that, as soon as strong kingdoms had established themselves behind her narrow coast line, the Empire would fall to pieces. It was now decided that these two Powers should be Russia and Prussia, and it is in the growth of these two kingdoms that we must look for the most significant results of the Northern war.

Peter had now "opened a window to the west". But to fulfil his idea, it was necessary to introduce Western civilisation and Western forms of government. The reforms had been commenced as soon as he began to reign, but were now completed. His model was German rather than French, and he was assisted by the German philosopher Leibnitz. Instead of the Zemski Sobor, or ancient representative assembly, and the Douma of the Boiars or nobles, which had controlled the executive, he substituted a Senate of nine, appointed by himself and under his control. This Senate was at once a Great Council for deliberation and for the issue of Imperial decrees, a High Court of Finance, and a Supreme Tribunal of Justice. Under it stood ten colleges, or chambers of central administration, and under them again seventy-two local governments,

Reforms of  
Peter

Govern-  
ment

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under a governor appointed by the Senate, and assisted by a council elected by the nobles; while the towns were entrusted to elected town councils, under the supreme magistrate of St. Petersburg, nominated by the Tzar. The villages were, however, left under their old communal system of the "Mir," governed by a village council which periodically allotted the lands, which were tilled in common, according to the size of the families, and were responsible to the central governments, or to their lord, if they had one, for the poll tax imposed by Peter.

By the institution of this poll tax, however, the position of those peasants who, besides the communal lands, held others of a lord by payment of a rent in kind, was seriously affected. To secure the regular payment of the tax, they were forbidden to leave their lands, and thus became fixed to the soil and confused with the serfs, who held their land in virtue of labour services due to their lord.

The collegiate system was also applied to the Church. The office of Patriarch was abolished. In his place the Holy Synod was established, formed of bishops, and presided over by a procurator-general, often a soldier, the direct representative of the Tzar. The object of this change is thus explained by Peter himself: "It will prevent the common people from being dazzled by the splendour and glory of the highest pastor, and from thinking that the spiritual power is higher than that of the civil autocrat, as belonging to another and a better realm".

In a word, he desired to check ecclesiastical pretensions, and to make the Church, so far as administration went, a department of State, under the complete control of the civil authority. It should, however, be remembered that, in questions of belief and matters of purely spiritual discipline, the Russian Church has always held its own as an integral part of the whole Eastern Church, and would resist any change of this kind without its consent. Nor has the civil power ever disputed this claim. Moreover, Peter had no desire for absolute uniformity. Though no propagandism was allowed, all sects were tolerated except the Jesuits, because they were political intriguers; Jews, "because they were rascals and cheats," and the extreme fanatics of the "old believers".

To enforce this autocratic rule, a secret Chancery of Police was organised; while in the place of the Streltsi, who had attempted to restore the power of Sophia, a regular standing army and navy, based on conscription, were established, and, to support the whole fabric, a more regular system of taxation.

The reforms of Peter did not stop here. Aware <sup>social and economical</sup> that this novel system would not suit the old Russian habits and customs, and that these are stronger than outward forms of government, he attempted to alter them as well. Without destroying the old nobility of birth, he instituted a nobility based on service, which took precedence of it. All nobles were forced to serve either in the army, the navy, or the civil service, and this official nobility

was divided into fourteen grades. He abolished the law of equal succession among the sons of nobles, because this tended to impoverish the landed nobility, and ordered that all the land should go to the eldest, or to one chosen by the father. Believing that the monastic life led to idleness, he suppressed the smaller monasteries, and ordered all those that remained to support hospitals and schools. No one under thirty, and no noble or State official was allowed to become a monk without the royal leave. The Eastern seclusion of women was in every way discouraged, Western dress introduced at court, and all who insisted on wearing the beard were taxed. On education, the views of the Tzar were strictly practical. Elementary schools were started in the provinces, and in the towns technical schools, while in St. Petersburg, an academy of the sciences was founded. By these measures he hoped to make his people industrious and well-informed, but he also wished to increase the wealth and prosperity of his country, and for that purpose agriculture, manufactures and commerce were promoted by the protective system, which was then everywhere in vogue.

This attempt to revolutionise the whole system of Russian government and society naturally led to grave discontent. Some asserted that the Tzar was no true Russian, but a substituted child, or an illegitimate son of his mother by a German. By others he was denounced, as his father had been, as Anti-Christ. But Peter was not to be deterred. He had cruelly suppressed the Streltsi at the beginning of his reign

because they supported Sophia his sister, acting in some cases as executioner himself, and had mercilessly punished all who opposed him. His own family were not spared. His sister, Sophia, was immured in a convent, and his first wife, Eudoxia, divorced, because they represented old ideas. Even his son, Alexis, for the same reason, was cruelly treated, and when he took to intrigues, was beaten to death.

Nor were his difficulties less with regard to his new administrative machine. To work it, it was necessary to have foreigners, and these were naturally disliked, while the Russians, who, after a preliminary training, often abroad, were admitted to office, proved in many cases hopelessly inefficient and corrupt.

This is well illustrated by Peter's remonstrances. He bids them be serious when at business ; not to talk too much or interrupt others ; and not to behave like market women. He says they make laughing stocks of themselves, and above all he accuses them in bitter words of being bribed. Peter, in fact, was learning that honesty and efficiency cannot be forced upon an uncivilised people by a tyrant's rod.

Nevertheless he persevered, and when in 1725 he died at the early age of fifty-three, he had changed a patriarchal, oriental despotism into one of modern type, and established the Bureaucratic system of modern Russia.

The question whether his policy was wise is much disputed to this day. Some say that in no other way could Russia have been reformed, or fitted to take part as she has since done in European affairs. This

school declares that the confusion which followed his death is not to be attributed to the dislocation and discontent caused by his reforms alone. The continued disputes with regard to the succession,<sup>1</sup> the break in continuity of policy, and the factions which resulted from the constant changes; the want of patriotism, and the selfishness of the nobles; the absence of any person of commanding power on or off the throne; all these things they say must be taken into account. This is not to be denied, yet some of these very evils were exaggerated, if not caused, by Peter's reforms. The character of those who adopted Peter's ideas was not really altered. They only acquired a thin veneer of Western civilisation, and with it many Western vices. The new institutions caused discontent, and were too new to bear the strain. The presence of foreigners aggravated the party strife, and led to the formation of a counter (old Russian) party.

Meanwhile in the midst of all these troubles, the power of the Bureaucracy, that is of the Government officials, grew, and often was too strong for the Tzar himself; the factions among the administrators often led to palace revolutions, and Russian government tended to become a despotism controlled by its own officials, and tempered by assassination. A consideration of these evils has led many to believe that Peter's reforms were a grave blunder, since they arrested

<sup>1</sup> From the death of Peter, 1725, to the accession of Catherine II., 1762, a period of only thirty-eight years, three Tzars and three Tzarinas ruled.

natural deveiopment and checked the real, if slower, progress which would otherwise have come about. Nay, some assert that Peter is chiefly responsible for the situation in Russia to-day, where we see on the one side a powerful official class who will not listen to reform, on the other, a people whose indignation has been aroused to blood heat by two centuries of oppression, and yet who have never been given the opportunity of self-government and have lost the training and sense of moderation which responsibility alone can give.

Whatever may be the truth as to these two views, we may at least assert that, for good or for ill, the reforms of Peter the Great have left an indelible impress on the history and character of his country.



## CHAPTER V

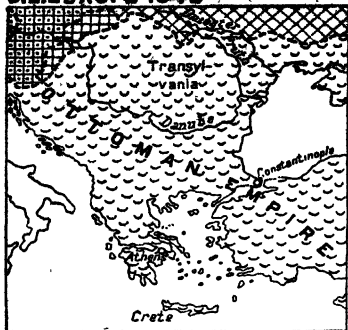
### THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS

Revival of  
the Otto-  
man power  
due to the  
Kiuprili  
Mahomed,  
1656-1661;  
Achmet,  
1661-1676

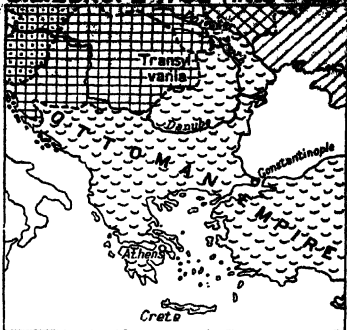
**D**URING the latter half of the seventeenth century the Ottoman Empire, which since the middle of the sixteenth century had been rapidly declining under the effects of inefficient and corrupt government, showed signs of unexpected vitality. The revival was due, not to the Sultans, who were, with few exceptions, nonentities, but to the influence of two remarkable men, Mahomed Kiuprili (1656-1661), and Achmet, his son (1661-1676), belonging to an Albanian family, which had been long settled in Asia Minor. When, at the age of seventy, Mahomed Kiuprili was appointed Grand Vizier by the mother of the young Sultan, he could neither read nor write. His aim was not to originate any new reforms, but to reawaken the ancient military spirit and racial pride of the Turks, accompanied by a contempt of all things Western, and to re-establish discipline and obedience. Under his just but remorseless rule, the insubordination of the Janissaries<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Janissaries were originally formed of Christian children, torn at an early age from their parents and brought up under military discipline, and not allowed to marry. With no stake

**S.E. EUROPE 1648**



**S.E. EUROPE 1792**



The Empire

House of Habsburg

Ottoman Empire

# **S.E. EUROPE**



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was repressed and their ringleaders executed, and the military service of the Spahis<sup>1</sup> rigorously enforced.

A Christian patriarch was hanged for treasonable correspondence with the enemy; the most powerful in the land felt the weight of Mahomed Kiuprili's heavy hand, and it has been computed that the number of those who fell before his inexorable justice amounted to no less than 500 a month. Meanwhile, at no time were the envoys of the Western Powers treated with greater contempt. The effect of this policy was instantaneous. Kiuprili first turned his attention to the war against Venice, which had broken out in 1645. At the moment of his accession to office, the Venetian fleet held the Dardanelles, and threatened Constantinople. After a severe struggle they were driven from the Straits, with the loss of their admiral, Mocenigo; the islands of Lemnos and Tenedos were recovered, and the siege of Candia in Crete was pushed on with vigour (1659-1661). Meanwhile Mahomed had interfered in the affairs of Hungary. That large country, which lies between the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube, was at that time divided into three parts. In the west lay Austrian Hungary with its capital, Presburg; to the south and east the Turks ruled

Turkish  
successes  
against  
Venice,  
1657-1661

Interference in  
affairs of  
Hungary

or position in the land, they were the devoted servants of the Sultan. But in the sixteenth century Turks were admitted, who were allowed to marry, and even to engage in trade. They thus lost their peculiar virtues and became insubordinate.

<sup>1</sup> The Spahis or Timarists were Turks who held their lands on terms of military service.

the great plain from the Danube to the river Theiss; to the east stood Transylvania, then tributary to the Sultan.

Declaring that Ragotski II., Prince of Transylvania, was acting too independently, the Vizier overthrew him and replaced him by a nominee of his own. Ragotski appealed to the Emperor Leopold, and thus the struggle became one between the Turk and the Habsburg for the possession of Hungary and the lower Danube.

At this moment Mahomed died (1661) and was succeeded by his son Achmet, who, a well-educated man, continued the policy of his father without its merciless severity. Having occupied Transylvania, he invaded Austrian Hungary, which had long been discontented under Habsburg rule; crossed the Danube at Gran, took Neühaüsel, ravaged Moravia up to the gates of Olmutz, and penetrated into Silesia. Then finding himself threatened on his flank by an Austrian army under Montecuculi, reinforced by some French troops, which Louis XIV. had sent out of irritation at the flogging and imprisonment of his ambassador, he fell back on Buda and was finally defeated at St. Gothard on the River Raab.

Achmet  
Kiuprili,  
1661-1676

Battle of  
St. Goth-  
ard, Aug.  
1, 1664

The Emperor, however, suspicious of the loyalty of the Hungarians, and jealous of the French, at once offered terms, and by the Treaty of Vasvar acknowledged the suzerainty of the Sultan over Transylvania, and left him in possession of Neühaüsel.

Treaty of  
Vasvar,  
Aug. 1664

Achmet now turned to the siege of Candia. In

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Venice  
surrendered  
Crete, Sep.  
1669

September, 1669, in spite of French assistance, the town capitulated and the Venetians surrendered the island of Crete, which had been in their hands since the thirteenth century. The conquest of Crete marks the high tide of Turkish conquest, and was the last Christian possession won by the Turks in the Mediterranean.

John  
Sobieski,  
King of  
Poland,  
1674  
Treaty of  
Zurawno,  
Oct. 1676  
Death of  
Achmet  
Kiuprili,  
Oct. 1676

The indefatigable Vizier then moved to the valley of the Dnieper. Here the Cossacks of the Ukraine, or March of the Dnieper, whose territory had lately been ceded by the Tzar Alexis at the Treaty of Andrussovo (p. 80), were resisting the attempt of Poland to establish her authority and to substitute the Roman for the Greek Church. The Poles were defeated, and their feeble king Michael surrendered the disputed territory. At this moment Poland displayed a spark of its ancient valour. The Diet indignantly refused to ratify the treaty and found a leader in John Sobieski, one of their nobles. This man, a true representative of the old prowess of his race, reversed the fortunes of the war. He defeated the Turks at Choczim and Leopold. Elected king by popular acclamation on the death of Michael (1674), he carried on the war and, by the Treaty of Zurawno (October, 1676), retained two-thirds of the disputed territory. Seven days later Achmet Kiuprili died, and with him the true glory of the Kiuprili family came to an end. His brother-in-law, Kara Mustapha, who became Grand Vizier, equalled his predecessors in ambition, but had none of the other qualities which had been the secret of their success

He abandoned their simplicity of life, and rivalled the Sultan in magnificence; he extorted money from foreign envoys as a price of concessions, which he did not carry out; he treated the Turks themselves no better than the Christians, and reintroduced the system of corruption and bribery in the administration, which his predecessors had tried to eradicate. Nevertheless, the spirit which had been aroused was not yet dead, and the condition of Austrian Hungary gave him his opportunity.

Here the Emperor Leopold had taken advantage of the peace with the Turk to restore order and to persecute the Protestants. When this repressive policy led to a conspiracy, severer measures were adopted. The office of Palatine, or Viceroy, was suppressed; the country, governed by Austrian officials, was treated like a conquered province; the Magyar language was discouraged, and soldiers quartered on the inhabitants. At other times this policy, though cruel, might have succeeded, but it was certain to be deeply resented by the proud Magyar nobles, and no sooner was the Emperor engaged in the Dutch war than they revolted under Emerci Toköli. Tököli not only gained the secret support of the Turks but, by the inscription on his coins, proclaimed Louis XIV. as the "Protector of Hungary". In 1681 Leopold, dismayed at the serious character of the revolt, offered certain concessions, which conciliated many. But Toköli, having now married the widow of Ragotski of Transylvania, hoped to use the influence and wealth of the family to gain that country for

Hungary  
rises under  
Emerci  
Toköli,  
1674

himself, and sought the definite alliance of the Turks.

Siege of  
Vienna,  
July-Sep.  
1683

Kara Mustapha at once listened to his appeal. Entering Austrian Hungary, he declared it tributary to the Porte, crossed the Danube in the spring of 1683, and in July encamped before the walls of Vienna itself. The Emperor fled to Passau, and no Power seemed likely to save the capital from her doom. The attention of Germany was distracted by Louis XIV.'s aggressions in Alsace; in Russia the Regent Sophia had been forced by the state of affairs at home to make peace with the Sultan; Venice was exhausted by her late war; Spain was in no condition to come to the rescue of the Cross; while Louis XIV. was not sorry to see the Emperor humbled for the time at least.

Fortunately the warrior King, John Sobieski, still ruled in Poland, and, though he had no reason to be pleased with the Emperor, yet he rightly judged that if Vienna fell the turn of Poland might come next. He had accordingly promised help in March, and was now hurrying on his preparations at Cracow. Yet Cracow was a long distance from Vienna, and, had the Vizier shown the energy of Mahomed or of Achmet, and ordered the city to be stormed, it would probably have fallen before succour could have arrived. His presumption, however, and his cupidity were to be his ruin. He believed that the terror of his name would force the city to capitulate, and hoped by a capitulation to win the chief booty for himself instead of sharing it with his soldiers. Kara,

therefore, proceeded leisurely with the siege until he was rudely awakened on the 4th of September by the approach of the united forces of the Empire and the Poles. On the 12th, Sobieski ordered the attack on the Turkish camp. After a severe struggle the enemy were seized with a panic and fled, leaving their camp, which had been most luxuriously fitted up, in the hands of the victors. Among the spoil a French plan for an attack on Vienna was found.

Sobieski  
relieves  
Vienna,  
Sept. 4,  
1683

Kara Mustapha had made his effort and had failed. He himself, at the command of the indignant Sultan, soon paid with his life the penalty of failure, but the evil results of his rule showed themselves in continued disaster.

In October, John Sobieski drove the Turks from Hungary. In the year that followed (1684), Leopold succeeded in gaining the alliance of Venice and the support of the Pope in a Holy League against the Moslem.

The Holy  
League,  
1684

The Polish King had saved Austria and earned the praise of Europe, yet the victory was of little advantage either to him or his kingdom. Immediately after the battle itself, Sobieski complained that the Austrians would not help to bury the Polish slain, and allowed the Polish baggage to be pillaged, and the breach thus formed was widened by the jealousy and meanness of the Emperor. Alienated by such treatment, John Sobieski withdrew from active co-operation in 1685. Meanwhile in Poland itself conditions had not improved. The Polish nobles could fight the enemy indeed, but they loved anarchy at



home. Nor had their king the qualities necessary for the task of ruling so turbulent a people. With all his chivalry and valour he was a true Pole, and had no statesmanlike gifts. He had little stability of character, and allowed himself to be influenced by a frivolous and selfish wife. The royal authority therefore declined during his last years, and the period which followed after his death, in 1696, is one of the most disastrous in the history of his unfortunate country, which, like the Ottoman Empire itself, was threatened with internal dissolution.

Death of  
Solieski,  
June 17,  
1696

Fortunately for the Holy League, the Ottoman Power was fast sliding back into her old ways. The viziers who rose to power were incapable. The Sultan Mohammed was deposed, and the two who succeeded him only reigned four years apiece.

Further  
successes  
against the  
Turk

Under these circumstances, the Christian advance was rapid. In 1686, Buda, the capital of Turkish Hungary, fell, and Tököli was driven into Transylvania. In August, 1687, the Turks were again defeated at Mohacs, on the Danube, the scene of one of their greatest victories in the sixteenth century.

Battle of  
Mohacs,  
August 12,  
1687

Meanwhile, in the south, the Venetians reconquered the Morea, and occupied Corinth and Athens, destroying, to their shame, a large part of the Parthenon in their attack.

Venice  
conquers  
the Morea,  
1687

In January of the following year (1688), the Hungarian "Estates" or Assembly, cowed by a reign of terror, declared the crown of Hungary hereditary in the Habsburg family, abolished the old coronation

oath, and did away with the right of insurrection hitherto enjoyed by the nobles. In May of the same year, the Hungarian patriot Tököli submitted, and acknowledged the Austrian suzerainty over Transylvania. Austrian successes in Hungary, 1688

The successes of the Austrians did not stop here. In September, Belgrade, the capital of Servia, was occupied, the Danube was crossed, and Servia and Bosnia overrun. Even to the east of the Carpathians, the Hospodar, or Viceroy of Wallachia, hitherto the vassal of the Sultan, rebelled, and Peter the Great of Russia began to advance on the Sea of Azof.

The year 1689, indeed, witnessed a slight reaction in favour of the Crescent. The Emperor Leopold was engaged in the war of the League of Augsburg. Mustapha Kiuprili, the brother of Achmet, who was called the Virtuous, was appointed Vizier, and actually recovered Belgrade and re-entered Hungary. In 1691, however, he was killed at the battle of Szalankemen, on the river Drave, and, though the Sultan, Mustapha II., who succeeded in 1695, actually took the field with some success, his cause soon declined. Battle of Szalankemen, Aug. 1691

In 1696, Peter the Great took Azof, and pushed the Russian boundary to the Southern Sea, and in 1697, Prince Eugène won the first of his great Turkish victories at the battle of Zentha. Peter takes Azof, 1696

The Turks had no alternative but to submit, and in January, 1699, the Peace of Carlowitz for a time closed this desperate struggle. By it— Battle of Zentha, Sept. 11, 1697  
Peace of Carlowitz, Jan. 1699

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1. Austria retained all Hungary except the Banát, or district, of Temesvar, on the Lower Theiss.

2. To Venice was ceded the Morea (with the exception of the city of Corinth) and most of the Dalmatian coast.

3. Peter secured Azof (though he was to lose it again in 1711).

4. Poland recovered Podolia, i.e., the country between the Bug and the Dniester, and the Western Ukraine.

**Decline of  
the Otto-  
man Power**     The Peace of Carlowitz marks the commencement of the final decline of the Ottoman Power. Henceforth she no longer seriously threatened Western Europe. It may well be doubted whether the revival started by the Kiuprilis could have lasted, even if their policy had been continued. The ills were too deep seated. The Turks had come into Europe as conquerors, and could still fight well, but they knew not how to administer a country or to develop its resources. The government of their European conquests, with their religious and racial antagonisms, was no easy matter. The Sultans were often the victims of the intrigues of the Janissaries, of the palace, and of the harem, and were sunk in indolence and vice; while the taxes, necessary to support them in their extravagance, were levied by unjust and unequal methods. The custom of polygamy among the ruling classes destroyed family life, and led to the infusion of foreign blood. The officials, often only half-Turkish, were hopelessly corrupt; and, if the lower classes, saved from the corruption of the harem because they could not afford to keep more than one wife, have to this day preserved their nationality and their pristine

honesty and trustworthiness, they have never succeeded in trade. This fell into the hands of foreigners, chiefly Greeks, who, with their independence, had lost all sense of honour. Finally, the influence of the Koran checked natural development and prevented radical reform. Believing it to be not only a creed but a code, which gives Divine sanction to the existing government, the Moslem looks upon all attempts to alter this government not only as a treason but a crime.

From this moment, therefore, the Turk became the sick man of Southern Europe, as was Poland in the North, and the question of the future is as to the date of his final decease and as to the disposal of his effects. In a word, what is termed "The Eastern Question" has begun.

## CHAPTER VI

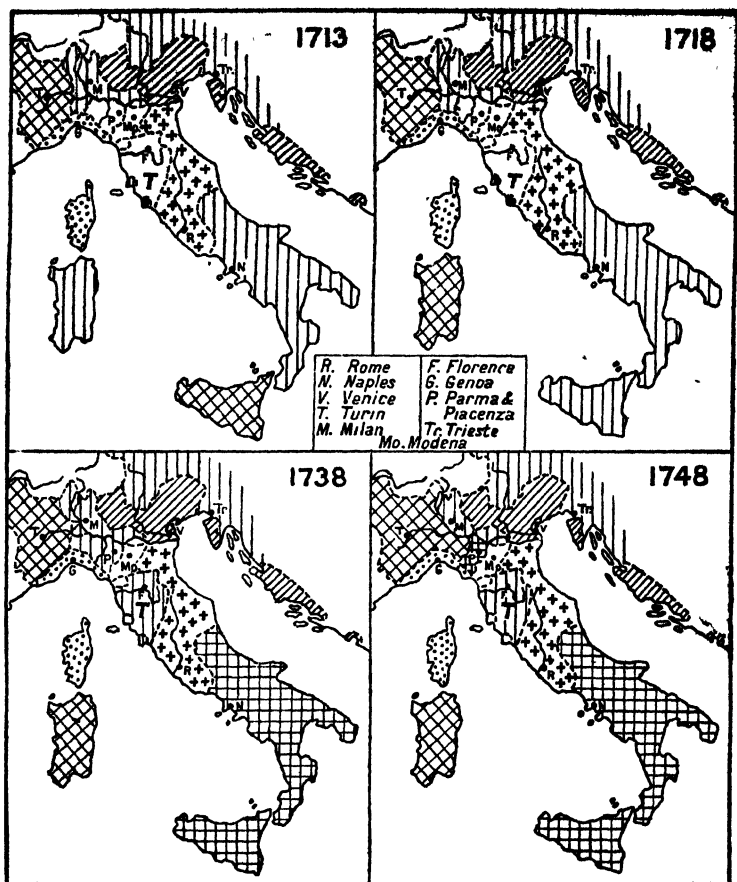
### THE TRIPLE AND QUADRUPLE ALLIANCE—THE TREATY OF HANOVER—THE WAR OF THE POLISH SUCCESSION —HOME POLICY OF THE REGENT ORLEANS

Discontent  
of Austria  
and Spain

IT could scarcely be expected that the Peace of Utrecht would long secure tranquillity. It had attempted to remodel the map of Europe, but in so doing it had failed to reconcile two at least of the late combatants. The Emperor Charles VI. looked upon his acquisitions in the Netherlands and in Italy as poor compensations for the crown of Spain, which he had hoped to unite with his possessions in Germany, more especially as the value of the Netherlands was impaired by the closing of the Scheldt, and by the irksome stipulations with regard to the Barrier towns.

Thwarted in his endeavours to free himself from these restrictions by the opposition of England and Holland, he refused to abandon his claim to the throne of Spain, and intrigued to exchange Sardinia for Sicily, which had been granted to the Duke of Savoy.

The discontent in Spain at the dismemberment of her ancient dominion was even more intense, while Philip V. still clung to the hope of exchanging the



Austria ..... Venice ..... N.B. Italy remained unchanged  
 Savoy ..... Genoa ..... from 1748 to the outbreak  
 Spanish Bourbons Papal States of the Revolutionary War  
 T. Tuscany except that Corsica went  
 to France 1768.

Alberoni crown of Spain for that of France in the event of the death of the young and sickly Louis XV. The Spanish national feeling was at this time voiced by Cardinal Alberoni, the new minister of Philip. This remarkable man, son of a market gardener of Placentia, though an Italian by birth, devoted himself to the interests of his adopted country, and dreamt of raising Spain once more into the position of a first-rate Power, and of regaining some of her lost possessions in Italy.

Alberoni was, however, too shrewd a statesman to desire war at once. He realised the weakness of Spain and wished to begin with reforms at home, while he sought to win the support of England by the offer of increased commercial privileges.

Elizabeth  
Farnese

Unfortunately this policy was too cautious for the daring second wife of Philip, Elizabeth Farnese, whom he had just wedded. This masterful woman, who has not inaptly been named "The Termagant," had been recommended by Alberoni as "a good healthy girl, accustomed to hear of nothing but needlework and embroidery". It was not long before, she showed that she was made of different stuff. While she supported the national aspirations of the Spaniards, she had besides her own dynastic ambitions to satisfy. As her brother, Francis, who ruled in Parma and Piacenza, had no sons, she hoped to acquire these possessions for Don Carlos, her infant son by Philip of Spain, who, as her husband had elder sons by his first wife, had no prospect of succeeding to the crown of Spain.

Aware that these conflicting aims of Austria and England of Spain were likely soon to clash, England and France had already drawn together. Both were interested in maintaining the peace of Europe, both had dynastic interests to serve.

The Jacobite insurrection of 1715 had been hatched in France, and though it had failed, George I. of England was anxious to buy off French assistance from any further attempt on behalf of the Pretender. Moreover, as Elector of Hanover, he feared the designs of Peter the Great on Mecklenburg, and those of Sweden on Bremen and Verden, which he had gained at the Peace of Utrecht, while the English were interested in resisting the claim of Sweden to close the Sound to foreign ships. The best way to secure these ends lay in an alliance with France, more especially as Peter was at this moment bidding for her friendship. In France, the Duke of Orleans, who held the regency during the minority of Louis XV. (1715-1723), was hoping to succeed to the throne on the death of the sickly young King, an event which was confidently expected shortly, and realised that England would be inclined to support his claim against that of Philip of Spain.

These were the chief causes of the Triple Alliance, which the English minister, Stanhope, and the Abbé Dubois, the French envoy, formed with Holland in January, 1717. Meanwhile Austria was negotiating with the Duke of Savoy for the exchange of Sardinia for Sicily, when the seizure of the Spanish inquisitor by the Austrians at Milan forced Alberoni to declare war.



Spain  
declares  
War

The die once cast, the Spanish minister acted with characteristic energy. In August, 1717, a Spanish fleet seized Sardinia, and in July of the following year, Sicily was invaded by Spanish troops. He next attempted to stir up trouble for his enemies. He succeeded in reconciling Peter the Great and Charles XII., and induced them to join with him in supporting a fresh Jacobite conspiracy in England. In France, he hatched a plot to overthrow the Regent, while he excited the Hungarians to fresh efforts against the Emperor. Vigorous as were the efforts of Alberoni, they were doomed to fail. He was in no condition to resist the united forces of England and of France. In August, 1718, his fleet was defeated by the English Admiral, Byng, off Cape Passaro, in Sicily, and the rest of his ships, according to the laconic despatch of one of Byng's captains, were captured and sunk "number as per margin". In the same month, the Emperor Charles VI., on the promise that his Italian interests should not be neglected, joined the alliance, which thus became the Quadruple Alliance, and now that the Treaty of Passarovitz (*cf.* p. 150) had freed him from the Turkish War, sent troops to Sicily. In December, the death of Charles XII. at Frederickshall, in Norway, ended the temporary alliance between Sweden and Russia. The Jacobite conspiracy in England and that in France were easily suppressed.

Battle off  
Cape Pas-  
saro, Aug.  
1718

The  
Quadruple  
Alliance

In January, 1719, France declared war, and an army invaded the North of Spain, supported by an English fleet. Philip now realised the uselessness

of further resistance. He dismissed Alberoni, and acceded to the terms dictated by the Quadruple Alliance.

By the Treaty of London (1720)—

Treaty of  
London,  
1720

1. Charles VI. was allowed to exchange Sardinia for Sicily, the Duke of Savoy being satisfied by his acknowledgment as King of Sardinia.

2. Don Carlos was recognised as heir to the Duchies of Parma and Piacenza.

Shortly after, Philip V. was conciliated by the betrothal of his infant daughter to Louis XV.

The interest of the complications we have briefly sketched lies more especially in the novel alliance between England and France, an alliance due partly to personal motives, but which had also sound political grounds, and which had succeeded in giving peace to Western Europe, and in the rearrangement of the map of Italy. Here Austria had gained by joining Sicily to Naples, while the ambitions of Elizabeth "the Terrible" had been partly realised.

The foreign policy of Dubois, the able though unscrupulous minister of the Regent, had been successful. The same praise can scarcely be awarded to his policy at home.

Here the efforts of the Regent had been directed to the following objects:—

Home  
policy of  
the Regent

(1) To substitute for the autocratic rule of Louis XIV., based on a bureaucracy of the middle class, a system of government by councils, which might in some measure mitigate the excessive cen-

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tralisation, and recall the nobility to a share in the administration.

(2) To adopt a more tolerant policy towards the Jansenists.

(3) To check the financial corruption, which had increased during the later years of Louis XIV., and to do something to meet the heavy debts incurred by the prodigal expenditure of the late reign.

The seven  
Councils of  
Admini-  
stration

In none of these endeavours did the Regent succeed. France had been too long accustomed to the centralised government of a bureaucracy to appreciate the division of power among seven councils. The members quarrelled with one another on questions of precedence. The nobles proved themselves incapable, and displayed their aristocratic insolence by contemptuous treatment of the middle class lawyers, who alone had the necessary knowledge. The Duke of St. Simon gives us an amusing confession of his own incapacity to serve in the Council of Finance, saying that he could not manage his own finances, and was ignorant of arithmetic.

In less than three years, the councils were suppressed, and the old system restored.

Ecclesiasti-  
cal policy

Nor was the ecclesiastical policy of the Regent more successful. It only aroused the jealousy of the Jesuits, and the flame of religious bigotry burst out afresh. The Regent had no consistency of purpose and no pith. The attempt was soon abandoned, and the Jesuits continued their persecutions.

Finance

Meanwhile the endeavours to restore the public credit led to one of the most startling crises in

the history of French finance. The Council of Finance had resorted to the usual practices of French financiers. They had lowered the rate of interest on the National Debt, they had debased the coinage, and they had endeavoured to put an end to the peculations of the farmers-general. The last ended, as in the reign of Louis XIV., in the punishment of a few, and the escape of the more powerful; the first amounted to partial repudiation; and the second, if it helped the exchequer, raised the price of all goods. The Regent now turned his ear to the attractive suggestions of a Scotchman, John Law, <sup>Law and the Mississippi Scheme</sup> who promised, if he were given a free hand, not only to wipe out the public debt, but to open out a glorious future.

The scheme proposed by this interesting, though visionary reformer, was as follows. In the year 1717 a great company was to be formed, which should not only act as its own banker, make a profit from coining and from the issue of paper money, and farm the taxes, but should start a vast trading and colonial enterprise, and thus acquire for itself the profits which had hitherto been gained by individuals. The company was to take over the National Debt, which amounted to 150,000,000 francs. For this it was to receive 3 per cent. from the Government, instead of the 4 per cent. which had hitherto been paid. The shares of this company were to be offered in the first instance to the public creditors in the exchange for their claims on the Government. In this way the Public Debt would be absorbed in

the shares of the company, and both the State and its creditors would benefit; the State, because it was to pay 3 per cent. instead of 4 per cent. on its debt; the creditors, because instead of a beggarly 4 per cent., they would receive good dividends on their shares.

The project at first met with brilliant success. To the Company of the West, or Mississippi Company, the colony of Louisiana and the great basin of the Mississippi was granted with sovereign rights. The East India Company was to be incorporated with it and many monopolies granted. It was then united with the bank, which had been started before, and it was given, in return for further loans to the State, the right to coin money, to issue banknotes, and to farm the taxes.

The shares, which were of the nominal value of 500 francs, were first issued below par; that is, they could be bought at less than their nominal value, and some holders of the National Debt hastened to exchange their claims for shares. Those that delayed till the market value of the shares rose did not effect the exchange on such favourable terms. As this transaction did not provide sufficient working capital to start the concern, new shares were created and offered for general subscription, but as the market value had risen the shares were now only to be obtained for 1000 francs, or double the original price. Nevertheless the prospects of the company, which had been loudly advertised, were now considered so good, that they were eagerly subscribed for. A mad

fit of speculation ensued. The shares rose by leaps and bounds until at last, at the close of the year 1719, a 500 franc share could be sold for 15,000 francs, that is, thirty times its nominal value. Fortunes were made in a few days, sometimes in a few hours, while the reckless issue of paper notes made money very cheap. The company paid a dividend of 12 per cent., and promised 40 per cent. in the future. Law's wildest dreams seemed likely to be fulfilled.

It was not, however, long before a reaction set in. The price at which the shares stood was not based on the earnings from the business of the company, which had not yet been properly set going, and people began to ask whence the dividends were to be derived, and saw further that even a 40 per cent. dividend would only give a return of 2 per cent. on the market value of the shares. At once the price of the shares began to fall, and a panic soon ensued.

At the same time the bank notes became depreciated, as inevitably happens when there is an over-issue, that is, when more notes are issued than there is gold or silver in the hands of the issuers to represent them. Law was now face to face with a double difficulty, how to keep up the market price of the shares, and how to prevent the further depreciation of the bank notes. Desperate measures were resorted to (February-March, 1720). The bank notes were declared to be inconvertible, that is to say, the bank would no longer give gold and silver coins for them. He then proscribed the use of gold

and silver coins, and finally forbade the use of the precious metals for other purposes, for jewellery and the like; he hoped in this way to destroy their value and keep up the value of the bank notes. But you cannot make people believe by legislation that paper money, which can be no longer exchanged for gold and silver, is of the same value as the precious metals themselves, at least for this reason, that gold and silver can be exported; while the foreigner will not take an inconvertible paper currency.

He then tried to fix the price of the shares, and offered to exchange them for bank notes. But as both still continued to fall this was of no avail. Both holders of shares and of bank notes were now threatened with ruin, and fortunes were lost as quickly as they had been made. Public indignation ran so high that it was necessary to put an end to the whole scheme. At first an endeavour was made to redeem the 10 franc bank notes, but the rush was so great that many people were crushed by the crowd, and the bank, unable to find money enough, was obliged to stop cash payment. All holders of notes or of shares were then ordered to present them with an account of how they had been acquired (July, 1720). Those who were discovered to have earned them during the period of speculation, had their amounts reduced, besides being fined in proportion to their gains. The nobles, however, as usual escaped. The shares which were held by the King, or which the company had bought back in the days of depression, were destroyed. By this means the number of the

bank notes was reduced to 1,700,000,000 francs, and the shares to 56,000.

The holders of bank notes received government securities, "rentes" at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., in proportion to the amount of their holding. The shares were returned to the owners. The bank was closed; but the Company of the West with privileges reduced, and with a restricted business, continued to do a fair trade until 1769, when, owing to the decline of the Colonial Empire, it was dissolved.

The Mississippi Scheme has many points of similarity with the South Sea Bubble in England, which occurred at the same time. Its failure was due chiefly to two causes—the wild speculation which had raised the price of shares far beyond their proper value, a speculation which the Government at first encouraged; and the reckless issue of paper money without adequate security. Its results were most unfortunate. The interest, indeed, on the National Debt was reduced from 4 per cent. to  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ; but this was only effected by what amounted to partial repudiation, and the capital amount of the debt was positively increased by 20,000,000 francs.

Meanwhile, if a few were enriched, thousands were ruined. St. Simon tells us that the distress was so great that he wonders there was no popular rising. He does not, however, remind us that the way in which nobles had escaped at the final settlement was one cause of the discontent. Some useful lessons were taught as to the true nature of credit, and trade received an impulse which did not end with



the crisis. Even that, however, was accompanied by an increase in the spirit of gambling and a lowering of commercial morality.

But perhaps the most significant result is to be sought for in the growing unpopularity of the Regent and of the Government, which expressed itself not only in epigrams and lampoons, but even in more serious works. Thus Montesquieu, in his *Persian Letters* (1721), made a severe, though covert, attack on the absolute government of France; while Voltaire, in his tragedy of *Œdipus* (1718), was believed to allude to the vices of the Regent. The easy-going Regent was himself a patron of literature, and was too indolent to intervene. All this serves to remind us that the age of Louis XIV. had passed away. The revival of criticism on the Government may also partly be accounted for by the influence of English ideas and writings, which was an outcome of the late alliance. Now for the first time Frenchmen began to study English, and to visit England, and learnt in that country the advantages of a freer government and of greater personal liberty.

Death of  
the Regent,  
Dec. 1723

The regency only lasted two years longer. In February, 1723, the young King reached his fourteenth year, and was considered to be of age. This, indeed, made little difference to the Government; but in December the Regent died a victim to his excesses, and the Duke of Bourbon became chief minister. St. Simon tells us that foreign nations regretted Orleans more than the French did. In other words, his foreign policy, directed as it was by the

Abbé Dubois, was on the whole successful. The same cannot be said of his home policy. The Duke was a man of quick wit; of wide, if desultory, reading. He dabbled in music, in painting, in science. He was broad-minded, and wished to promote the public welfare. But all these gifts were marred by superficiality and by utter want of character. He loved half measures, and lacked courage, decision and persistency. The reforms he inaugurated were lightly abandoned; they therefore served only to weaken the centralised government left by Louis XIV., and excited criticism. His private life was not only infamous, but it was not even veiled by an outward show of decency, and his example was followed by the court and by society. "Vice," it has been said, "no longer paid virtue the homage of hypocrisy," and "for shallowness and levity, concealed by literary artifice and play of frivolous wit, the regency has never been surpassed." All that can be said for the Regent is that he did not allow his mistresses to play the part in politics which they did in the reign which was now to follow.

The arrangements made by the efforts of the Quadruple Alliance in 1720 (*cf.* p. 122) were not likely to endure. They neither satisfied the Emperor nor Spain. Philip of Spain desired to recover Gibraltar from England, while Elizabeth Farnese was not content with the mere promise of the succession of her son, Don Carlos, to the Italian duchies of Parma, Placentia and Tuscany. Moreover, the friendly relations established by the

First  
Treaty of  
Vienna  
and the  
League of  
Hanover,  
1725

Regent between France and Spain through the betrothal of the Infanta to Louis XV. in 1722, were at this moment rudely shaken by the policy of the Duke of Bourbon, now minister in France. Anxious to secure a wife of maturer age for the King, and therefore likely sooner to bear an heir to the French crown—the Infanta was then barely eight years old—he sent her back to Spain, and found a new bride in Maria, the daughter of Stanislas Leszczinski, King of Poland.

Meanwhile, the Emperor, who was eager to advance the commercial interests of the Austrian Netherlands and to establish trading settlements in India, had just formed an East India Company at Ostend. He was also intent on securing the recognition of the so-called “Pragmatic Sanction” by the European Powers, that is to say, the acknowledgment of the right of his daughter Maria Theresa to succeed to his dominions, contrary to earlier provisions by which females had been excluded. As none of the members of the Triple Alliance—England, Holland and France—would support either of these schemes, and as England and Holland were violently opposed to the Ostend Company, threatening, as it did, their commercial interests, he turned a ready ear to the suggestions of Ripperda, a Netherlander of Spanish origin, who had succeeded Alberoni as minister in Spain.

Ripperda      Why, Ripperda urged, should not Spain and the Emperor come to terms with regard to Italy, and unite to gain their respective ends elsewhere?

On this basis, the courts of Spain and Vienna signed the Treaty of Vienna in April, 1725. The news of this astounding alliance at once aroused the fears of the old members of the Triple Alliance, who accordingly, in September, formed the counter League of Hanover, which was subsequently joined by Prussia, Sweden and Denmark.

This was answered by a still more startling agreement between Spain and Austria in the Secret Treaty of Vienna (November, 1725), by which—

1. Philip of Spain guaranteed the Ostend Company, and promised to transfer to it the commercial privileges hitherto enjoyed by England and Holland.

2. The Emperor promised to try and regain Gibraltar and Minorca for Spain.

3. The hand of Maria Theresa, the Emperor's eldest daughter, was to be given to Don Carlos, the son of Elizabeth, and with it the succession to all the Habsburg dominions outside Italy.

4. Don Philip, Elizabeth's second son, should marry the Emperor's second daughter, and hold the Austrian possessions in Italy, as well as the reversion to the Italian Duchies.

5. The claim of the Stuarts to the English Throne should again be supported, and France be forced to surrender Alsace to the Emperor, and Cerdagne, Roussillon and Lower Navarre to Spain.

By this treaty a complete revolution in the diplomatic relations of Europe was caused. The Habsburg in Austria broke with the maritime Powers with whom they had been allied since the reign of William III. of England, and came to terms with the Bourbons of Spain, and had the idea of Ripperda succeeded, France might have lost Alsace, the most

precious conquest of Louis XIV. Nay, it might have happened that by the extinction of the line of Don Carlos and of Don Philip the old possessions of Charles V. would have fallen once more into the same hands.

Moreover, when Frederick William I., bribed by the promise of the Emperor that he should succeed to Julich and Berg on the Rhine on the death of the present holder (Treaty of Wusterhausen, 1720) withdrew from the League of Hanover, and Catherine I. of Russia promised her support, success seemed not unlikely. In any case a war which would involve all Europe appeared imminent.

Ripperda  
dismissed,  
May, 1726

Nevertheless there was little prospect of this magnificent dream being realised. A strong party at Vienna, led by Prince Eugène, warned Charles that the project of this double marriage would, if carried out, make Austria a province of Spain, while in Spain itself the old animosity against Austria was aroused, and Elizabeth dismissed Ripperda (May, 1726). The next year, the death of the Tzarina, Catherine I., altered the policy of Russia, and Charles VI., unwilling to engage in war, began negotiations for peace.

Treaty of  
Seville,  
Nov. 1729

Elizabeth was now convinced that Austria would never allow the marriages to take place; she reverted to her original scheme of securing the Italian duchies for her eldest son, Don Carlos, and gained the assent of England, France and Holland by the Treaty of Seville (November, 1729). Finally, the Emperor, eager to obtain further guarantees for his Pragmatic

## THE WAR OF THE POLISH SUCCESSION 135

Sanction, unwillingly gave way on the question of the Italian duchies, and signed the second Treaty of Vienna with England, Holland and Spain.

Second  
Treaty  
of Vienna,  
July, 1731

By that treaty :—

1. The suggested marriages between the courts of Madrid and Vienna were abandoned.

2. Charles VI., in return for a guarantee of the Pragmatic Sanction by England and Holland, consented to abolish the Ostend Company, allowed Don Carlos to take possession of Parma and Piacenza, the last Farnese Duke having just died, and acknowledged his right of succession to the Duchy of Tuscany.

Once more England and France, now guided by Walpole and Fleury, who had succeeded the Duke of Bourbon in 1726, had saved Europe from a general war. The Emperor, in the vain hope of securing the succession of his daughter, had allowed the Spanish Bourbons to fix their hold on Italy, a hold they were not to relax, and Elizabeth Farnese had gained a great triumph. That restless spirit was not, however, satisfied, and soon the question of the Polish Succession gave her another chance.

Ministry of  
Cardinal  
Fleury,  
1726-1743

The most serious objection to an elective monarchy lies in the danger that each election may involve the country in war. Even in an hereditary kingdom a disputed succession has often led to war, as had been the case in the War of the Spanish Succession, and was again shortly to be the case in that of the Austrian Succession. But where the monarchy is elective the danger is intensified. Every country which has political interests to advance is constantly intriguing

Condition  
of Poland

during the life of the reigning monarch in support of its future candidate, and is ready to support his claims when the vacancy occurs.

Such had been the fate of Poland ever since the extinction of the Jagellon Dynasty at the close of the sixteenth century. In the year 1709, Frederick Augustus, the Elector of Saxony, had been restored to the Polish throne by Peter the Great after the defeat of the Swedish King Charles XII. (p. 94), who had set up Stanislas Leszczinski as his candidate, and now the death of Frederick Augustus (February, 1733) attracted the attention of Europe.

Of the candidates for the Polish throne two were the most prominent, Stanislas Leszczinski, the Polish noble who had already held the crown for a brief period (1704-1709), and Frederick Augustus, Elector of Saxony, son of the previous king.

The cause of Augustus was supported by Charles VI., the Emperor, and Anna, Tzarina of Russia. The Emperor was influenced in his choice by the promise of the Elector that he would guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction, while Anna thought that she could exercise more influence in Poland under a foreign king than under the rule of a Polish noble, who had once been the candidate of Sweden, and was further conciliated by the offer of the Duchy of Courland to her favourite, Biren.

The question whether war would be avoided depended on the policy of France. Had she acquiesced in the election of Augustus, or had she remained neutral, as Cardinal Fleury wished, the Poles would

not have dared to resist. Louis XV., however, not unnaturally desired to press the claims of his father-in-law, Stanislas. Stanislas was the popular candidate in Poland; it had been the aim of France since the days of Louis XIV. to use Poland as an ally in the north-east against Austria, and Russia; and the military party, headed by Villars, one of Louis XIV.'s veterans, were eager for a war, which might give them an opportunity of fleshing their swords against their old enemy the Habsburgs. Fleury accordingly was forced to take up the cause of Stanislas, and by bribing the important Polish nobles had little difficulty in securing his election (1st September, 1731). Russia and Austria at once prepared for war, and most of the princes of the Empire, with the exception of Prussia and the Electors of Bavaria, Cologne and the Palatinate, all three members of the Wittelsbach family, followed suit. France now had to look for allies. Two were soon found. Philip of Spain had been of late leaning to the side of France, more especially since the birth of the Dauphin in 1729 had destroyed all chance of his succeeding to the French throne. He had been irritated by the neglect of his interests which the Emperor had shown in the late war, and Elizabeth Farnese was alarmed at the delay of Charles VI. in recognising Don Carlos as Duke of Parma and Placentia, which were held to be Imperial fiefs. A French alliance, she thought, might strengthen his position, and even offer an opportunity for further acquisitions. Elizabeth, therefore, though with some

Election of  
Stanislas  
Leszczynski,  
1st Sept.  
1731



hesitation, joined the popular cry and declared for the French alliance.

Policy of  
Charles  
Emanuel,  
King of  
Sardinia

More surprising was the conduct of Charles Emanuel I., the young King of Sardinia. It is here that this astute person began that clever, though critical policy which he pursued with such success until the close of the War of the Austrian Succession, a policy dictated by the geographical position of his country. Geography, it has been cynically said, did not allow him to be honest. A glance at the map (p. 5) will show that Piedmont, with its capital Turin, and Savoy on the other side of the Alps, command the two great passes from France into Italy, that of the Mont Cenis and the Mont St. Genèvre, while on its eastern side Piedmont marches with the Duchy of Milan, then in the hands of Austria. In any struggle, therefore, between France and the Habsburgs, it was difficult to maintain neutrality, and easy to play off one Power against another. With this aim in view, Charles Emanuel determined to accept the tempting offers of the French.

League of  
Turin, 8th  
Sept. 1733

By the League of Turin, France, Spain and Sardinia agreed to assist each other in driving the Habsburgs from Italy. Of the Austrian possessions, Don Carlos was to have Naples and Sicily and to hand over the Duchies of Parma and Piacenza, and the claim to the Duchy of Tuscany to his younger brother, Don Philip. Milan and Mantua were to belong to the King of Sardinia, and in return he was to cede Savoy to France.

Treaty  
of the  
Escurial  
First  
family  
compact,  
Nov. 1733

In November, a closer secret compact was concluded between France and Spain. The first of the three family compacts, the object of which was to

push the interests of the Bourbons. By this treaty the quarrel between the two Bourbon courts of France and Spain, which had lasted since the Peace of Utrecht, was finally ended; and henceforth, if not active allies, they never fought again.

Of the remaining Powers, the interests of Sweden, <sup>Neutrality of Sweden,</sup> Turkey and Prussia were involved. Sweden and <sup>Turkey,</sup> Turkey wished to oppose the advance of Russia; for <sup>Prussia</sup> Sweden might hope to recover some of her lost possessions on the eastern coast of the Baltic, and the Porte feared the increase of Russian influence in Poland, which marched with her territories on the lower Dnieper; the King of Prussia was jealous of the continued rule of Saxony in Poland. None of these three Powers, however, took any part in the war. Sweden, torn by the factions of her nobles, who were divided into the parties of the "Hats" and the "Caps", was in no position to move, while the "Hats" were in the pay of France. Frederick William I., the cautious King of Prussia, was unwilling to risk his well-drilled army on the battlefield; he sent a contingent to the imperial army, but took no further part, while Turkey, which would not stir unless Fleury would guarantee her against any loss, was shortly called off by the attack of Nadir Shah of Persia, who was incited thereto by Russia.

In England, the opposition clamoured for war in support of the Emperor. The alliance with France, <sup>Peace policy of Walpole</sup> due chiefly to the personal and dynastic interests of the Hanoverian Kings and the Regent, had been breaking up of late. The Regent was no more, and

George II. was firmly established on the throne. Here, then, it was said, was a great opportunity for forming another grand alliance like that of William III., of returning to the side of Austria, the true ally of England and of Hanover, and of seizing the moment, when France and Spain were engaged in a European struggle, to settle our colonial and commercial quarrels with those countries. Walpole, however, who since 1730 had become supreme in the councils of George II., resolutely declined to interfere. Poland, he said, was no affair of England. That his policy of peace had much to be said for it at the moment cannot be denied. Yet some have held that an alliance with the Emperor at this juncture might have prevented the outbreak of war, or at least so have strengthened Austria that she might have fared better than she did; and that in this way the future War of the Austrian Succession might have been prevented, while the struggle with France in America and in India, which was inevitable, might have been ended sooner than it was.

Stanislas  
deposed  
and the  
Elector of  
Saxony  
elected  
King, Oct.  
1733

In the war which ensued Austria and Russia had little difficulty in overthrowing Stanislas and in securing the election of their candidate, the Elector of Saxony. Fleury, after an ineffectual attempt to relieve Danzig at the mouth of the Vistula, where Russian and French swords were crossed for the first time in history, abandoned the Poles to their fate, and devoted himself to the campaigns on the Rhine and in Italy. In 1733, Charles Emanuel took Milan, and in 1734, aided by the French, won

the battles of Parma and Guastalla. In the same year Don Carlos seized Naples; and in 1735 he invaded Sicily and was crowned King. Meanwhile the French had occupied Lorraine and were successful on the Rhine.

By this time, however, the aims of the members of the League of Turin began to diverge. Elizabeth, not content with the acquisition of Naples and Sicily by Don Carlos, tried once more to gain for him the hand of Maria Theresa, the Emperor's daughter, and was eager to secure Mantua for Spain. By these designs she at once aroused the fears of Charles Emanuel. He was not prepared to see North Italy in the grip of the Bourbons. If Milan and Mantua were to go to Spain, while Don Philip secured Parma and Placentia, as well as the reversion of Tuscany, he would be completely surrounded by the Bourbons of Spain and France, and rather than this he preferred to leave Austria in quiet possession of Milan and Mantua. Accordingly he began to make secret overtures to the Emperor. Fleury, seeing how matters stood, forthwith signed the preliminaries of the third Treaty of Vienna with Charles.

Third  
Treaty of  
Vienna,  
Oct. 1735-  
1738

By that treaty it was agreed that:—

1. Francis Stephen, the Duke of Lorraine, should cede that duchy to Stanislas Leszczinski, the ex-King of Poland, with reversion to France, and receive the Duchy of Tuscany instead on the death of its Duke; this occurred in 1767.
2. France should guarantee the Pragmatic Sanction.
3. The Emperor was to have Parma and Placentia and to retain Milan and Mantua with the exception of the districts of

Tortona and Novara, which were to be granted to Charles Emanuel.

4. Don Carlos was to hold the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily.

Spain and Charles Emanuel were indignant at being thus left in the lurch, and for some time refused to acquiesce, but they were helpless without the aid of France, and finally in November, 1738, they accepted the offers dictated to them and signed the Definitive Treaty.

The war which was thus closed has little importance from a military point of view, and the campaigns were in no way striking. Yet in its character and in its results it was none the less significant. It closed a period of intricate and confused diplomacy, caused by the quarrels arising out of the Peace of Utrecht, more especially with regard to Italy,<sup>1</sup> and vitally affected the future of all the Powers engaged. Austria suffered most. She had indeed placed her candidate on the Polish throne; she retained Milan and Mantua, and gained for a brief period Parma and Placentia; while, after the marriage of Francis Stephen of Lorraine to Maria Theresa, daughter of the Emperor, Tuscany became an Austrian possession. But she had to surrender Naples and Sicily, her prestige had been impaired, and Lorraine was lost to the Empire. It

<sup>1</sup> The distribution of Italy remained with one exception, that of Parma and Placentia, as it was settled by the Treaty of Vienna, till the wars of the French Revolution. In 1748 Austria lost Parma and Placentia, which was given to Don Philip, son of Elizabeth Farnese.

was not till 1768 that Lorraine finally fell to France, but during the life of Stanislas the duchy was practically in her hands. The most remarkable result of the period thus closed is to be found in the success of Elizabeth Farnese. At every peace made since the Peace of Utrecht the cause of her children had been advanced, and now at last she had gained for her eldest son the proud position of a kingdom, that of Naples and Sicily. In 1748 her ambition was finally satisfied by the acquisition of Parma and Piacenza for her second son, Don Philip.

The War of the Polish Succession is also of importance in the history of North-Eastern Europe. Poland henceforth practically lost her independence, and was before long to be divided between Russia, Prussia and Austria. Russia in this war, for the first time in history, had sent an army to the Rhine and established her claim to interfere in Western politics.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION

Prussia  
under  
Frederick  
William I.,  
1713-1740

WHILE the other Powers of Europe had been engaged in incessant wars, Prussia, under the careful rule of Frederick William I., had been gradually preparing herself for the important part she was henceforth to play. Since his succession in 1713 he had for the most part pursued a policy of neutrality. He had taken part in the struggle between Peter the Great and Charles XII., and had thereby gained part of Western Pomerania, with Stettin and the mouth of the Oder, his most important waterway to the sea. For a moment he had joined the League of Hanover, but had speedily withdrawn (*cf.* p. 134), and in the war of the Polish succession had, after some hesitation, contented himself with sending his contingent to the Imperial army, which he could not lawfully refuse. His policy has generally been attributed to his ignorance of foreign affairs and to his fears lest war might spoil the symmetry of his well-drilled army and decimate his favourite "Potsdam Giants". A more probable reason is to be found in his conviction that Prussia needed to be strengthened and reformed, and for that purpose

required peace. In any case it is as a reformer and peaceful administrator that Frederick William I. takes his place in the history of his famous house.

To appreciate the value of these reforms we must remember the character of the country over which he ruled. This has already been described in speaking of the Great Elector (*cf.* p. 81). Here it is only necessary to add that the Duchy of East Prussia had been freed from the supremacy of Poland by the Great Elector; that the Elector, Frederick III., had been granted the title of King of Prussia in 1701, thus becoming the only Protestant King on the continent; and that by the Peace of Utrecht Spanish Gueldres had been acquired.

Many of the characteristics of the Prussian territories remind one of the possessions of the Habsburgs, but the racial differences were not so great in Prussia, and the German element was stronger. The Prussian State owed its position in Europe to its ruler, and had no ancient memories, as was the case in Austria. Moreover, the Elector King had no shadowy Imperial claims, which in Austria were ever conflicting with the interests of the Archduke; and while Austria was the slave of the Jesuits, in Protestant Prussia the Church was the servant of the King. These differences, partly at least, explain why the policy to be attempted so unsuccessfully in Austria by Joseph II. (*cf.* p. 232) met with brilliant results in the case of Prussia.

The Great Elector had already laid down the lines of reform, but the problem still remained for final



The re-  
forms of  
Frederick  
William I.

solution. If Prussia was ever to become a State, it could only be done by establishing a strong central executive under the personal guidance of its ruler. To strengthen the powers of the local assemblies would have meant the perpetuation of aristocratic tyranny and of national disruption, and if the State was to be strong against its enemies without, it must be based on a large army. Frederick, extravagant and fond of display, had done little beyond winning the royal title. His son, Frederick William I., took up the work with all the energy of a narrow yet powerful mind.

Adminis-  
tration

Finding that the financial and military departments were always quarrelling, he united them into one Supreme Directory of War, Finance, and Royal Domains, and made that Directory, though nominally under the Privy Council, the real instrument of civil and military administration under his own direction, while foreign affairs were controlled by an interior council of which he was the head. Having thus established an effective and simple system of government, he next devoted himself to the army. He more than doubled its numbers, and gave Prussia an army of 80,000, nearly as large as that of Austria with her far greater resources.

Army

Half of this army was raised by conscription on a local basis, half was recruited from foreign lands, and the Elector resorted to every device to obtain recruits of fine physique. The proportion of cavalry and of artillery was increased, an elaborate system of drill such as was then unknown was enforced, and

the iron ramrod introduced whereby the rapidity of firing was enhanced. To meet the heavy expenses thus involved, he proceeded to abolish the feudal <sup>Finance</sup> tenure on which his nobles had hitherto held their land, and substituted one uniform land tax. He carefully administered the royal domains, which were especially large in Prussia. He continued the excise and sought to raise revenue by a rigorous system of customs on all foreign goods, whereby he also hoped, according to the ideas of his day, to develop industries at home.

To the same end foreign artisans were invited and protected; Protestant exiles, who had been driven from Salzburg, were settled in Prussia; marshes were drained, and agriculture fostered and improved.

Although he was unable to ameliorate the position <sup>The serf</sup> of the serfs throughout the country, since they be- <sup>Peasants</sup> longed to the nobles, in his own royal domains in Prussia a system of fixed dues was substituted for the old labour services.

On the question of education, the views of the King <sup>Education</sup> were peculiar. He had a contempt for all higher learning, for literature and art, and did nothing to promote them. Education was to be essentially practical, but more than one thousand schools were founded, primary education was made compulsory, and the study of medicine and of the economical and administrative sciences was encouraged. The <sup>Ecclesiasti-</sup> same features are seen in his ecclesiastical policy. <sup>cal policy</sup> Theological controversy was to be avoided, and the practical side of religion insisted upon. Uniformity

of outward ritual was rigidly enforced, and although Roman Catholics were tolerated, scepticism was not. A Berlin dentist who was suspected of atheistical views was subjected to an examination conducted by the King himself, and a free-thinking philosopher he threatened to immure.

Treatment  
of his son

The system thus established was carried out with remorseless severity. Honest, straightforward, and with a genuine desire to improve his country's welfare, the King was unsympathetic, narrow, coarse and brutal. Strict and parsimonious himself, he expected his subjects to be the same. As he drilled his army, so he drilled his subjects. There is much in all this which is distasteful to an English mind, and yet we may allow that his policy was suited to his times. In any case this excuse can hardly apply to his treatment of his son. The young Frederick was by nature fond of literature and music, and hated the practical studies, military, economical and evangelical, upon which his father insisted with rigorous formality. When in his anxiety for a freer life and to see the world, he tried to escape, his father forced him to witness the execution of his tutor, who was suspected of connivance, and subjected him to stricter confinement and still severer discipline. It may be that the young man learnt under this harsh treatment the power of self-restraint, of endurance and self-reliance, but it is certain that it hardened and brutalised him; that it destroyed his generosity and his sense of honour, and helped to make him a cynic who disbelieved in human good-

ness. Had Frederick's education been different he might have been a far finer character, yet without his father's reforms he would probably never have earned the title of "The Great". Frederick William I. left to his son a well, if despotically, governed people, a splendid army, and a well-filled treasury, and a few months after his death their value was to be conclusively proved.

Death of  
Frederick  
William I.  
Accession  
of Fred-  
erick the  
Great,  
May, 1740

On May 31, 1740, Frederick the Great became King; in October the death of the Emperor, Charles VI., without male heirs, brought forward the double problem as to who should succeed him in his own possessions, and who should be elected Emperor. Throughout his reign of twenty-nine years, the policy of Charles had been devoid of all consistency of purpose. No doubt the position was one of great difficulty. Of his hereditary territories the centre lay at Vienna, divided into *Lower Austria*, round the capital itself; *Inner Austria*, which comprised Styria, Carinthia and Carniola; Tyrol and the Breisgau, near the Black Forest, which were called *Further* and *Upper Austria*. To this nucleus, composed of a German-speaking race, were added the Tsech, or Slavish Bohemia, with its dependency, Silesia, and Austrian Hungary, peopled by the Ruthenes, also of Slavish origin, with a Magyar or Tartar nobility, both interspersed by a certain admixture of Germans.

Death of  
Emperor  
Charles VI.,  
Oct. 1740;  
his policy

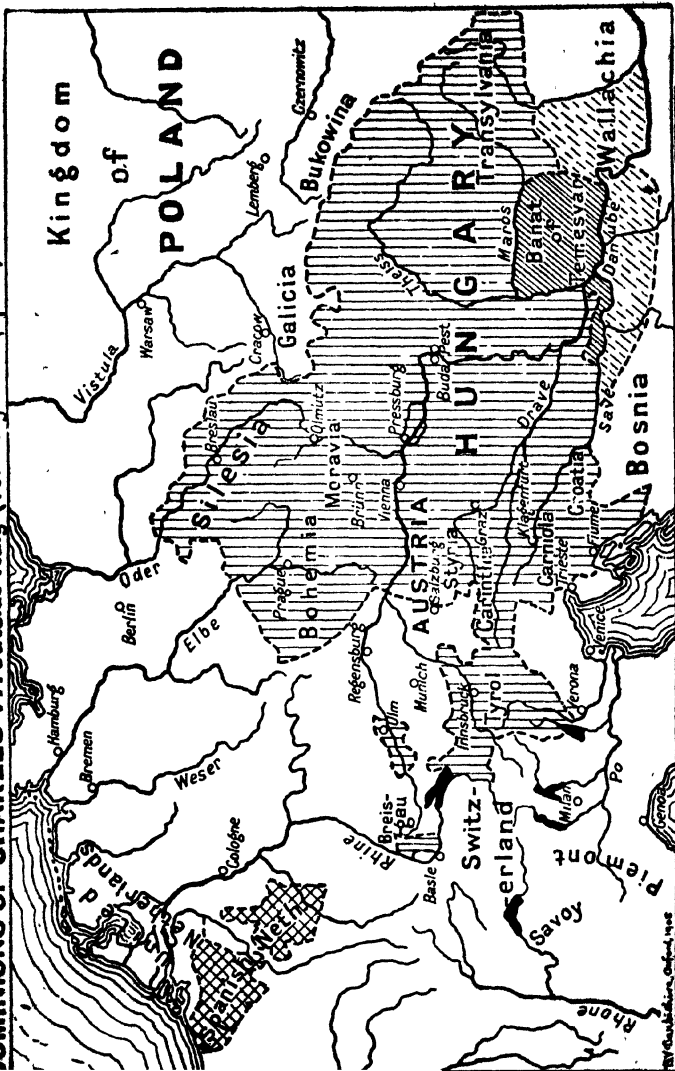
The Peace of Utrecht had added to these hereditary dominions by the grant of the Austrian Netherlands and of the possessions in Italy, which at

Charles' death consisted of the Duchies of Milan, Parma and Placentia, while by the Treaties of Passarovitz (1718) and Belgrade (1739) he had gained Turkish Hungary and Transylvania.

The bond between these different peoples was of the loosest description. They spoke eleven different languages or dialects; they had no common interests. Charles ruled his territories by different titles; he was Archduke of Austria, Duke of Milan, King of Bohemia and of Hungary; and the administration of each of the five groups into which they fell was a separate one. It surpassed the wit of man to adopt a policy which would suit all these at once. To advance down, or to the south of, the Danube meant the increase of the non-German element; yet the Turk could not be left in Hungary at least. Any attempt to add to the Italian territories would certainly be opposed by Spain, and in the last war had been resisted by France and the King of Sardinia, while any scheme for developing the trade of the Netherlands aroused the hostility of England and Holland.

It would appear that the best policy would have been to abandon Italy altogether; and either to have exchanged the Netherlands for Bavaria, an idea which was entertained, or to have surrendered that as well; and, as Prince Eugène advised, to have married the Emperor's eldest daughter and heiress, Maria Theresa, to Charles, the young electoral Prince of Bavaria. In this manner the way would have been prepared for the incorporation of a rich and

# DOMINIONS OF CHARLES VI. Outside Italy (For Italy see Map p.119)



Extent at accession 1711 .....  
 Gained at Treaty of Passarovitz 1718 .....  
 Lost at Treaty of Belgrade 1739 .....  
 Gained at Treaty of Utrecht 1713 .....

German-speaking country, which marched with the Austrian lands; the German element would have been strengthened, and a powerful kingdom might have been formed, which could have more successfully controlled the non-German Bohemia and Hungary.

But Charles was the victim of the great prospects of his earlier years. He had hoped, by the war of the Spanish Succession, to gain Spain and all her dependencies in Europe and in the New World, and thus to re-establish the Habsburg Empire of the great Charles V. He had neither the foresight nor the strength of character to confine himself to possibilities. It was long before he gave up his claim to the throne of Spain. Even then he clung with desperate tenacity to the poor morsels of the great inheritance which he had gained at Utrecht, and tried to increase them, now in this direction, now in that. He had not indeed been altogether unsuccessful; but his finances were exhausted, and the death of Prince Eugène in 1736 had deprived him of his only capable statesman and general. His government was in hopeless confusion. His prestige had been impaired of late, and he had been willing to sacrifice much to obtain the guarantee of Europe for his Pragmatic Sanction. Prince Eugène had warned him that a well-filled treasury and a well-drilled army would be of more value than a thousand such guarantees, and no sooner was he dead than the truth of this statement was seen.

Accession  
of Maria  
Theresa

The rule of the young Maria Theresa—she was barely twenty-four—was indeed accepted in the

Austrian lands. She proceeded forthwith to declare her husband, Francis Stephen, late Duke of Lorraine, whom she had married in 1736, joint ruler, and hoped to secure his election to the Imperial crown. But her succession was nowhere very popular, the attitude of Bohemia and Hungary was doubtful, and Charles of Bavaria at once protested. Though the Wittelsbach electors of Bavaria had at times intermarried with the Habsburgs, and Charles himself had married the cousin of Maria Theresa, they had long been jealous of their more powerful neighbour. The Elector of the day had joined France in the war of the Spanish Succession, and, though neutral since that time, had not supported the Emperor in his wars.

Charles of Bavaria, indeed, had been anxious to secure the hand of Maria Theresa for his son, but he had been refused, and he now laid claim to the Austrian inheritance. His claim was based on the will of Ferdinand I., the brother of Charles V. (1564), whose daughter had married the then Elector. According to the Bavarian copy, that will had promised the succession to the Bavarian house on the failure of "male heirs" to the Habsburgs; but in the Austrian copy the words were "legitimate heirs," which would, of course, include Maria Theresa. As authorities to this day dispute about the correct version, the conduct of the Elector can cause no wonder. Nevertheless, had he found no support, he would not have pressed his cause. Of the European Powers, England, Holland and Russia stood by their



guarantees ; but the policy of the Elector of Saxony, now King of Poland, and of the King of Sardinia, who had some shadowy rights themselves, was doubtful ; while Fleury declared that the guarantee of France had only been in support of "lawful possession," and not of a mere claim.

Frederick  
seizes  
Silesia,  
Dec. 1740

While matters thus hung in the balance, Europe was astonished by the unexpected move of Frederick the Great of Prussia. Frederick's ministers had advised him to make a demand for Silesia as the price for his support of Maria's other claims. Silesia is a valuable district, about one-third the size of England. It completely surrounds the upper waters of the Oder, and as its boundary to the north is within twenty-four hours' march of Berlin, its possession was of the greatest strategic importance to Prussia. Frederick knew its value full well, but this conventional way of proceeding was not to his taste. He was convinced that Austria would refuse his offer, and therefore determined to follow the injunction once given him by his father that he should strike quickly when it was necessary to strike at all. Without giving any warning, therefore, he ordered his army to advance, and by the end of January had occupied Breslau, the capital ; then saying that he had moved to save Silesia from others who had claims on the inheritance of Maria Theresa, he offered to negotiate. His offers were indignantly rejected. Maria Theresa refused to treat as long as a Prussian soldier remained in the country, and sent an army to oppose him.

This was, however, defeated at the battle of Mollwitz, and Frederick was practically master of <sup>Battle of Mollwitz, April, 1741</sup> all Lower Silesia.

Attempts have been made to justify this unwarrantable conduct. As for certain ancient claims which Prussia had on Silesia, they are best answered by the King himself, who acknowledged that they were worthless. It is true that Frederick was not bound by the guarantee made by his father at Wusterhausen (1726) to support the claims of Maria Theresa, for that promise had been made on a condition which Austria never kept (*cf.* p. 134), and Frederick William I. had then warned Charles that his son would avenge him. Again, it may be urged that Austria had of late shown by her jealous conduct that nothing was to be gained from her generosity. These arguments would have justified Frederick in taking the opportunity to bargain for Silesia, but are no defence of this breach of all rules of international morality. It is strange that Frederick should have acted as he did. He would have been in nearly, if not quite, as good a position if he had sent an ultimatum, with twenty-four hours' notice, before he marched, and would have placed himself in the right in the eyes of other Powers. But he was a cynic. He affected to despise the ordinary conventionalities as trivial matters, and loved to shock the world. "Ambition," he said, "and the desire to make myself talked about, these were my motives."

The war, however, was still confined to Prussia

and Austria. Once more, as in the war of the Polish succession, it lay with France to decide whether it should become European. For Bavaria needed money, and as England was at that moment engaged in a war with Spain over commercial questions, and held the Mediterranean, Spain could not move on Italy unless France gave her a passage for her troops. Finally Russia, owing to the death of Anna (October, 1740), was not at the moment in a position to intervene.

Treaty of  
Nymphen-  
burg, May,  
and of  
Breslau,  
June, 1741

Again the war party in France prevailed, and Fleury listened to their cry that now at last the moment had come finally to ruin Austria. In May, 1741, therefore, he concluded the Treaty of Nymphenburg with Charles Albert of Bavaria, and that of Breslau with Frederick in June. Maria Theresa was to have part of Austria and Hungary, the rest of her territories were to be partitioned; Charles Albert of Bavaria was to be elected Emperor. This decided the matter, and shortly most of the European Powers, except Russia, had taken sides.

The coalition against Maria Theresa appeared overwhelming. It included France, Prussia, Sardinia, Saxony and the Electors of Bavaria, Cologne and the Palatinate. The only allies that Maria Theresa could gain were Holland and England. Of these, the Dutch were kept at home by fear of France. George II. declared Hanover neutral, and Walpole only sent subsidies, and moreover kept urging Maria Theresa to come to terms with Frederick.

Nevertheless, the coalition was not so formidable

as it seemed, for Bavaria and France were alone united in their aims. Saxony could be bought off, Charles Emanuel could never be trusted, Spain would only act in Italy. Above all, the interests of France and Frederick were sure to clash. France did not wish to make Frederick too powerful, while Frederick had joined France unwillingly, and had no desire to see Austria completely humbled or French influence too great in Germany. If he could only gain Silesia, he would gladly withdraw. To keep these points in mind will help us to follow more clearly the complications which ensued.

France began the war by sending two armies into the field, one to the Netherlands to keep the Dutch in check, the other to co-operate with the Bavarian army, while Frederick acted on the defensive in Silesia.

In September, 1741, the united French and Bavarian forces occupied Linz on the Danube, and were within three days' march of Vienna. Frederick now urged them to advance on the capital itself, but fearing lest this move would force Austria to come to terms with Frederick, they turned northwards into Bohemia. They thus missed the chance of settling the war at once, while Maria Theresa, seeing the necessity of conciliating Prussia for the moment at least, made the secret convention of Klein-Schnellendorf with Frederick, whereby she allowed him to hold Silesia without definitely acknowledging his claim.

Convention  
of Klein-  
Schnellen-  
dorf, Oct.  
1741

She was now free to concentrate her attack on the Bavarians and French. The Hungarians, after long negotiations, had in return for a guarantee of their privileges now recognised her title, and raising the cry "We will die for our Queen," supported her most loyally. She was therefore able to check the advance of the allies in Bohemia and to threaten Bavaria itself.

Frederick again takes part in the war and captures Olmutz, Dec. 1741

Unfortunately, Frederick now began to be alarmed. Whichever way the fortunes of war might turn, he dreaded lest he should be left out in the cold. The secret convention had given him time to strengthen his hold on Silesia, and it was no longer of much use. Seizing, therefore, the pretext that the convention had been divulged, he again intervened, and entered Moravia, seizing the important town of Olmutz. By this move he threatened the position of the two Austrian armies in Bohemia and Bavaria, and had the French and Saxon army, which was then at Prague, heartily co-operated, Vienna itself might have fallen. The French and Saxons, however, refused to leave Bohemia, and Frederick, unsupported, was forced to abandon Moravia and drop back into Bohemia.

Battle of Chotusitz, May, 1742  
Treaty of Berlin, July, 1742

Furious at the conduct of his allies, he now once more offered Austria terms. Maria Theresa declined them until she heard that Charles of Lorraine had been defeated at Chotusitz on the Upper Elbe. Then at last she consented to treat. By the Treaty of Berlin, Frederick, in return for the definite cession of Silesia, promised to remain neutral. The Treaty

of Berlin thus ended what is known as the First Silesian War.

End of  
First  
Silesian  
War

Maria Theresa, once more free from her most formidable opponent, was able to concentrate her attack on France and Bavaria. Other events also helped her cause. In February, 1742, Walpole had fallen from power, and Carteret, who now guided the foreign policy of George II., was anxious to pursue a bolder policy and join Austria in humiliating France. In the following September, Saxony also withdrew from the allies, while in January of the next year, Fleury died, and France under the immediate government of the incapable Louis XV. fell into confusion.

Improved  
prospects  
of Austria

The Austrians, therefore, had little difficulty in driving the French from Bohemia in the autumn of 1742, and in occupying Munich in the following June. Charles Albert, who had been elected Emperor in January, 1742, was forced to fly from his dominions, to suspend hostilities, and to leave Bavaria in Austrian hands till the conclusion of the war (June, 1743).

Battle of  
Dettingen,  
June, 1743

In the same month the French were defeated at Dettingen by a mixed army of English, Hanoverians, and Austrians led by King George of England himself.

Maria Theresa should now have made peace. The Emperor Charles offered to renounce his claims to her hereditary dominions and to abandon the French alliance on condition that he should be left in quiet possession of Bavaria and of the Imperial title. Unfortunately, Maria Theresa was elated by her success. Sublime in adversity, she was remorseless in her

Treaty of  
Worms,  
Sept. 1743

revenge. She hoped to compensate herself in Bavaria for the loss of Silesia and to humble the Bourbons. Accordingly, supported by England, Holland and Saxony, she concluded the Treaty of Worms with Charles Emanuel of Sardinia. That Prince had entered the war in the spirit of a mercenary, and was open to the highest bidder; on the promise of material acquisitions he agreed to join in driving the Spanish Bourbons from Italy.

Frederick  
again inter-  
venes, May,  
1744

As might have been expected, Frederick the Great at once became alarmed. He did not wish to see Maria Theresa become too strong. If the new league were successful, as seemed not improbable, the allies might turn on him, and, with his usual suspicion, he observed that no guarantee of his possession of Silesia had been made in the public terms of the Treaty of Worms. Accordingly in May, 1744, he formed the Union of Frankfort with the Emperor and some of the other German princes. Meanwhile France and Spain had drawn more closely together. In October, 1743, by the Treaty of Fontainebleau,

The Family  
Compact,  
Oct. 1743

they formed the second family compact for the mutual defence of Bourbon interests, and France, which had hitherto not been nominally at war with England, now definitely declared hostilities, prepared to support the young Pretender in his projected attempt, and in June, 1744, joined the Union of Frankfort. It is idle to discuss the question of morality in dealing with the Prussian King, but for this change of policy there is much to be said. He could hardly be expected to remain passive while

## THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION 161

Maria Theresa strengthened herself, and her future conduct showed that nothing short of necessity would force her to abandon all hopes of regaining Silesia, which she termed the fairest jewel of her crown.

With the summer of 1744, therefore, we enter into a new phase of the struggle, which has been called the Second Silesian War. The two leagues again stood face to face, the one intent on dismembering Austria, the other on humbling the Bourbons and Prussia, while the entrance of France and England into the war as principals, reminds us that the struggle for India and America had already begun.

The death of the Emperor in the following January still further altered the character of the war. His successor in the Bavarian electorate, Maximilian Joseph, at once offered to give up all claims on the Austrian dominions and promised to vote for the husband of Maria Theresa at the coming Imperial election. Maria Theresa accepted his terms in the Treaty of Füssen and turned her energies against her arch-enemy Frederick. In May, 1745, the Elector of Saxony was bribed by a promise of a share of the Prussian dominions to abandon his policy of neutrality, and the Tzarina Elizabeth joined the Austrian alliance.

The fate of Frederick now seemed sealed. His only allies were France and Spain. Spain could not help him, and France was intent on the Netherlands. Here in May, led by Marshal Saxe, she revenged the defeat of Dettingen in the victory of Fontenoy. Frederick declared that the victory was of no

Second  
Silesian  
War, Aug.  
1744-Dec.  
1745

Death of  
Emperor  
Charles  
VII., Jan.  
1745

Treaty of  
Füssen,  
April, 1745

French  
victory at  
Fontenoy,  
May, 1745



more use to him than if it had been fought on the Scamander, and sought the mediation of England. The cautious Henry Pelham, who had abandoned the magnificent ideas of foreign policy entertained by his predecessor Carteret, complied, but Maria Theresa declined to listen. Determining, therefore, to conquer or to die the Prussian King neglected the advance of the Russians, threw himself on the Austrians and Saxons and won a decisive victory at Hohenfriedberg.

Frederick's  
victory at  
Hohen-  
friedberg,  
June, 1745

England once more urged Maria Theresa to come to terms, and in August secretly promised Frederick that he should retain Silesia. Maria, however, was obdurate. She declared that there was no safety till Frederick was completely crushed; she would prefer, she said, to make peace with France, and actually offered terms. Fortunately for the King of Prussia, Louis XV., elated by the success of his arms in the Netherlands and in Italy, refused, and shortly after the defeat of the Austrians at Sohr and that of the Saxons at Kesselsdorf, followed by the Prussian occupation of Dresden, convinced Maria Theresa of the uselessness of continuing the struggle against Prussia. With an indignant protest at the conduct of England—"Heavens," she said, "see how we are treated by our allies"—she submitted to the inevitable and made the Treaty of Dresden with Frederick.

Austrian  
and Saxon  
defeats at  
Sohr, Sep.,  
and Kes-  
selsdorf,  
Dec. 1745

Treaty of  
Dresden,  
Dec. 1745;  
end of  
Second  
Silesian  
War

By this Treaty, Frederick recognised Francis Stephen of Lorraine, the husband of Maria Theresa, as Emperor; and guaranteed Maria Theresa in her possessions in Germany,

## THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION 163

though not elsewhere, while Austria promised to leave Frederick in possession of Silesia.

Frederick did not attempt to defend his conduct, in thus for the third time deserting his allies, except by saying that the French had neglected his interests in the late campaign, and that they should have known that he would forsake them when it suited him.

The war was now practically confined to a struggle of Austria against France and Spain on the continent, and between England and France in India. Argenson, the French foreign minister, indulged in a scheme of driving the foreigner, both Spanish and Austrian, from Italy, and of forming a league of native republics or kingdoms under a federal bond. The dream, though interesting as an anticipation of what was to come one day, was not to be realised. It would mean the expulsion of Don Carlos and Don Philip from Italy, and this Elizabeth Farnese would do her best to frustrate, while even Charles Emanuel of Sardinia feared that, if successful, Italy would fall under the tutelage of France. The policy of this shiftily prince had throughout been directed towards maintaining a balance between the Habsburgs and the Bourbons. He therefore only carried on negotiations as a blind to gain time, till Austria should be ready to move. Spain, angry at Argenson's policy, did not co-operate. Accordingly, Austria and Sardinia had little difficulty in clearing Italy of both French and Spanish troops, and even attacked Provence. In the following April the defeat of the Young Pretender at Culloden

War confined to Austria, England and France

Failure of d'Argenson's Italian policy

French and Spanish driven from Italy, Feb. 1746

Defeat of  
Young Pre-  
tender at  
Culloden,  
April,  
1746

French de-  
feated at  
sea but suc-  
cessful in  
Nether-  
lands

destroyed all hopes of a Stuart restoration, while at sea the French suffered two serious reverses, off Ushant, October, 1746, and Cape Finisterre, May, 1747. On the other hand, the French, led by that great general, though profligate man, Marshal Saxe, completely overran the Netherlands and even entered Holland.

Thus the successes of the Austrians in Italy were balanced by the victories of Marshal Saxe in the Netherlands, while if in India the French admiral Labourdonnais was able to take Madras, in North America the French lost Louisbourg, the capital of the island of Cape Breton, which guards the entrance to the St. Lawrence.

Dissensions  
between  
the allies

Under these circumstances, it was but natural that the Powers should begin to weary of the war, and that quarrels should arise between the allies themselves. England was little pleased at the way in which her subsidies were used by Austria to carry on the war in Italy, while the defence of the Netherlands was left to her. Charles Emanuel of Sardinia, unwilling to see the Austrians too successful in Italy, was again intriguing with France. The death of Philip of Spain and the accession of Ferdinand VI., his only surviving son by his first marriage, had weakened the influence of Elizabeth Farnese. In a word, all the Powers except Austria were anxious for peace, and even Maria Theresa recognised that as Elizabeth of Russia did not move, a continuation of the war without the hearty co-operation of England and of Sardinia was impossible. The actual terms of the

Philip V.  
of Spain  
succeeded  
by Ferdin-  
and VI.,  
July, 1746

## THE WAR OF THE AUSTRIAN SUCCESSION 165

peace were however dictated by France and England, and were only tardily accepted by the other Powers.

By the terms of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle which was signed by France, Holland and England in April, 1748, and finally accepted by all in November :—

The Peace  
of Aix-la-  
Chapelle,  
April-Nov.  
1748

1. The acquisition of Silesia by Frederick was guaranteed.
2. Savoy and Nice were restored to Charles Emanuel as well as Upper Novara and Vigevano, "two leaves of the Milanese artichoke".
3. The Netherlands were restored to Austria in return for Parma and Piacenza, which were ceded to Don Philip.
4. The French restored Madras to England and regained Louisbourg, the capital of Cape Breton.

Three Powers, Frederick, Charles Emanuel and the Spanish Bourbons, were the chief gainers by the war. In France there was much discontent at this "stupid peace" by which the Netherlands, a most valuable conquest, were surrendered to provide for an establishment in Italy for Don Philip, the son-in-law of the King. For the rest, if we except the acquisition of Silesia by Frederick, the results of this prolonged struggle were unimportant, while the peace itself is chiefly interesting on account of the jealousies and divisions among the allies themselves, which preceded it, and contributed to it, and which heralded the radical changes in alliances which were shortly to follow.

## CHAPTER VIII

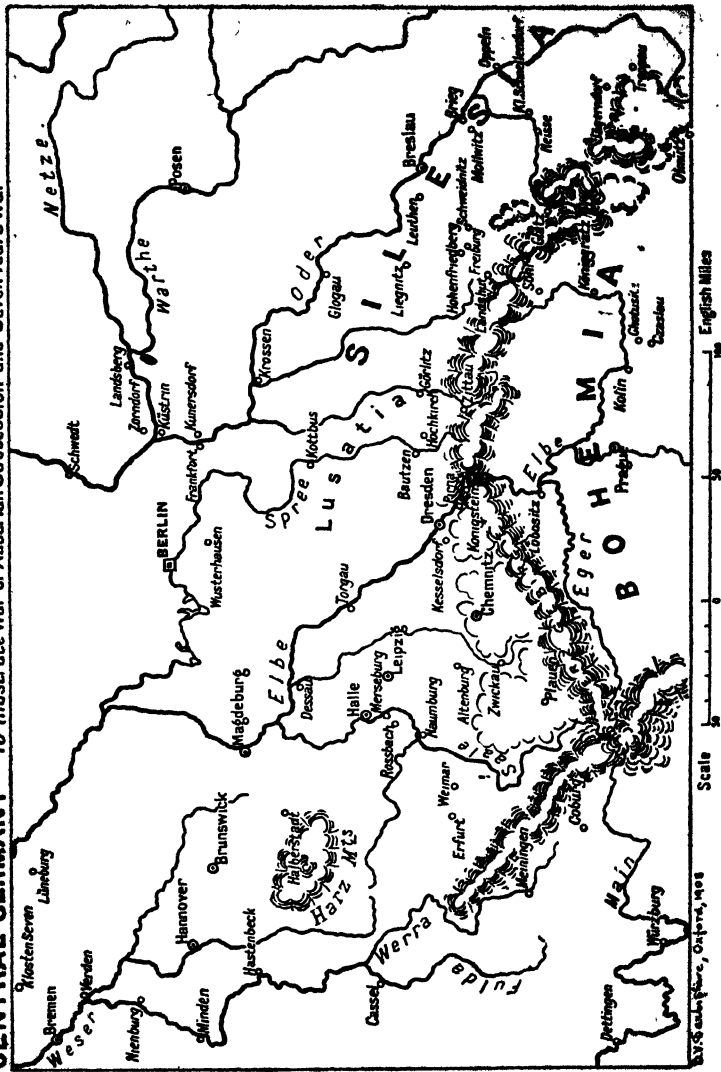
### THE CHANGES IN EUROPEAN ALLIANCES—THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR

The re-  
forms of  
Maria  
Theresa

**B**Y no one was the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle more disliked than by Maria Theresa. She had been forced to surrender Parma and Placentia in Italy, and above all, Silesia. She had declined to sign the clause which permanently guaranteed its possession to Frederick, and the war was no sooner over than she was preparing for another.

If, however, Austria was to have any chance of success, two things were essentially necessary: a reform of the government at home, and a change of alliances abroad. Hitherto the old councillors had, as the Empress herself said, "been too prejudiced to give useful advice, and yet too respectable to be dismissed". But about this time Providence removed most of these, and four new men came to the front who were eager for change: Ludwig Haugwitz, the son of a Saxon general, who had administrative experience in Silesia, and who, as Chancellor, devoted himself to reforming the government; Rudolf Chotek, who especially concerned himself with financial matters; Van Swieten, originally Maria Theresa's phy-

# CENTRAL GERMANY To illustrate War of Austrian Succession and Seven Years War



sician, who turned his attention to education; and Wenzel, Count Kaunitz, who became minister of foreign affairs.

Adminis-  
trative  
reforms of  
Maria  
Theresa

The weakness of Austrian government will be easily appreciated if we remember the character of the lands over which it ruled (*cf.* p. 149), a collection of territories rather than a well-organised State; there was no common deliberative or legislative assembly, and only a confused and ineffective system of central justice and administration. Hence constant friction between various parts, the subordination of the interests of the State to those of the particular province or country, and a general want of efficiency.

Moreover, the nobles had too much power in their respective provinces, and, supported by the clergy, resolutely opposed reforms which touched their privileges.

No doubt a good many of these difficulties were due to deeper causes than the mere external form of government—that is, to the racial divisions and jealousies which remain to this day. Nevertheless something could be done by a reformed system of government; and to this end Haugwitz now devoted himself. The general lines of his reforms were those already adopted with such good effect by Austria's new rival Prussia, and their aim was to increase the central authority, and to weaken the powers of the local nobility. The political power of the Provincial Assemblies was reduced, especially in matters of finance and of the army. Instead of an annual contribution of men and money, a fixed sum was to

be voted for ten years, and the administration of the army was taken entirely out of their hands. The local administration was placed in the hands of Colleges (*Gubernium*) appointed by the central authority and responsible to it, in which, though the nobles found a place, the real work was done by the professional members.

In the central departments the judicial work was definitely separated from the financial and administrative and placed in the hands of a Supreme Court (*Hofrath*).

The financial and the administrative affairs were placed in the hands of a Directory, or ministry of internal affairs, which was, however, subsequently separated into a central chamber (*Kammer*) of finance, and a supreme chancery (*Kanzlei*) for executive purposes. Hungary, however, still retained its own separate chamber of finance (*Kammer*) and chancery (*Kanzlei*), nor would the Diet surrender any of its powers.

The Council of War, the only body which had hitherto represented unity, was continued, and later a better organised Privy Council (*Staats Rath*), with supreme control over these departments, took the place of the earlier secret conference of ministers.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time the army was increased and reformed. Conscription was introduced, the peace establishment fixed at 100,000, which could be in-

<sup>1</sup>These reforms did not apply to the Netherlands or to the Italian possessions.



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creased in time of war to 195,000, and better drill introduced.

Financial,  
social and  
educational  
reforms

The financial system was next improved by Chotek. The exemptions of nobles from taxation were abolished, a universal income tax and a graduated poll tax introduced. Many internal customs were abolished. The trade of Trieste and the Mediterranean was encouraged, and canals and roads were improved.

At the same time the lot of the peasants was bettered. The jurisdiction of their lords over them was regulated, their dues reduced, and they were offered the opportunity of buying the lands they held.

Lastly, under the advice of Van Swieten, the University of Vienna was brought more closely under Government control, and at a somewhat later date a system of primary education was established.

While steps were thus being taken to develop the internal resources of the country and to make the government and the army more efficient, Kaunitz was urging his mistress to look for new allies.

Kaunitz  
and his  
ideas of  
foreign  
policy

This remarkable man, who dressed like a dandy and had the airs of a coxcomb, had, by the ability with which he had conducted some diplomatic missions, completely won the confidence of Maria Theresa, and was permitted by that proud lady to treat her in a manner allowed to no one else. His views were based on the central point that the rise of Prussia had revolutionised the balance of power in Europe. Prussia was now the arch-enemy of Austria and must be resisted; and Silesia, whence

Frederick could strike a blow at the very heart of her possessions, must be retaken. Of her old allies, the maritime Powers, England and Holland, had by their conduct in the late war shown that they had no longer the interests of Austria at heart. England had even forced her to cede Silesia and to make the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Indeed, in any future war they were not unlikely to join Prussia, the young and Protestant country. Russia, owing to constant changes in the order of succession and to the palace revolutions, could not be depended upon. Under these circumstances, the true ally was France, for she was as much concerned in checking the power of Prussia as Austria herself.

Although there had been indications of the truth of Kaunitz' view during the late war, this complete reversal of a traditional policy was opposed by the Emperor and some of the other ministers. The Empress herself, however, turned a willing ear to it, and in 1750, Kaunitz was appointed Austrian ambas-  
 sador at Versailles. Here he succeeded in gaining the personal favour of Louis XV., and his mistress, Madame de Pompadour. The King, however, at this moment was very unpopular. The Government, now practically in the hands of Madame de Pompadour, was in great confusion, and engaged in a serious quarrel with the "Parlement" of Paris over the question of taxation and the treatment of the Jansenists. This was scarcely the moment to reverse the traditional policy of centuries. The proposals of Kaunitz, therefore, met with no approval, and on his

Kaunitz,  
ambas-  
sador at  
Versailles,  
1750-1753

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Kaunitz,  
Chancellor,  
1758

return to Vienna in 1753 to become Chancellor and Prime Minister, there seemed little prospect of success.

Conflict  
between  
England  
and France  
in America

At this moment the conflict between England and France in America, which had been long smouldering, broke out afresh and materially altered the situation. The importance of the struggle then will be best appreciated if we briefly describe the position of affairs. With the exception of Jamaica and a few West Indian islands, the English colonies were confined to a comparatively narrow strip between the Alleghany mountains and the sea. To the north lay Canada in the hands of the French, and to the south their colony of Louisiana commanding the mouths of the Mississippi, and originally colonised from Canada itself.<sup>1</sup>

It was the aim of the French more effectually to occupy the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi, and thus to connect their colonies in the south with Canada. Had they succeeded in their attempt, the English would have been prevented from pushing westward, and the rest of North America to the

<sup>1</sup> The *English* colonies were : (1) The indeterminate territories held by the Hudson Bay Company, north of Canada (founded 1670) ; (2) The thirteen colonies with Acadia, though its limits were disputed ; (3) Newfoundland ; (4) The Bermudas and Bahama Islands ; (5) Jamaica and Honduras ; (6) Barbadoes, Montserrat, Antigua and Tobago. The *French* were : (1) Canada and the Island of Cape Breton ; (2) Louisiana ; (3) French Guiana in S. America ; (4) The islands of Guadeloupe, Martinique, Grenada and S. Domingo (or half of the present Haiti). Dominica, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent were neutral.

shores of the Pacific, might have belonged to France. When therefore Duquesne, the Governor of Canada, seized the valley of the Ohio and built the fort which bears his name, the English colony of Virginia thought it necessary to resist, and sent against the French a body of militia under Washington, who was however defeated. One year later, a force of regulars, under General Braddock, shared a like fate, and the general himself fell.

Defeat of  
Washington, 1754,  
and of  
General  
Braddock,  
July, 1755

Unless England was prepared to submit, it was clear that war must be declared against France herself. In that case, the French would be certain to threaten Hanover, and also to seize the barrier fortresses which England thought necessary to protect Holland and her own commercial interests. As England could not hope to resist this attack without the aid of some continental power, the English ministry approached their old ally Austria, and asked her to send troops to defend the electorate of Hanover, to rebuild the barrier fortresses which had fallen into decay, and to strengthen her troops in the Austrian Netherlands. The demands of England seemed to confirm the assertion of Kaunitz that her alliance was burdensome; Maria Theresa was indignant at the way she had been treated in the war of the Austrian Succession; she therefore answered that in the event of a war with France, Hanover would be probably attacked by Prussia, the old ally of France, and that she was too far away to defend it. As for the Netherlands, it had been the persistent policy of England and of Holland to interfere with their

Austria  
refuses  
England's  
advances

George II. development, and that she would neither increase the  
 therefore army of occupation nor rebuild the fortresses unless  
 turns to Russia and Prussia England and Holland would co-operate. George II.  
 Prussia of England therefore turned to Prussia, having  
 previously obtained a promise of assistance from the  
 Tzarina Elizabeth in return for a subsidy (September,  
 1755).

The personal relations of George and the Prussian King were by no means cordial, and there were further disputes arising out of the late war which had not been settled. Nevertheless, Frederick was convinced that Maria Theresa was forming a league against him. He had learnt through the treachery of Menzel, a clerk in the Saxon service, that a secret treaty for the dismemberment of Prussia had been signed between Austria, Russia and Saxony in 1746, during the late war. He knew that negotiations to the same effect had been going on since the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. The news, therefore, of the agreement between England and Russia made him fear that, if he declined the request of England, he might find her added to the coalition against him, while France under her present Government, for which he had a supreme contempt, might leave him in the lurch. If, on the other hand, he joined England, he hoped at least to secure the neutrality of Russia. Accordingly, he concluded the Convention of Westminster; by which—

Frederick  
 makes Con-  
 vention of  
 Westmin-  
 ster, Jan.  
 1756

1. He promised to protect Hanover from the French.
2. England undertook to abandon her design of using Russian troops for that purpose.

## THE CHANGES IN EUROPEAN ALLIANCES 175

3. Both Powers mutually guaranteed the neutrality of Germany.

In the meantime, France had despatched an ambassador to Berlin, asking for a renewal of the old alliance. He was met by the news of the convention. Frederick, indeed, attempted to show that his agreement with England was purely defensive, and did not necessarily pledge him to act offensively against France. He further advised Louis XV. to devote French energies to the sea, and not to mix himself up with European affairs. By this advice he hoped to keep on good terms with both countries and to isolate Austria. Louis XV., however, angry at the rebuff, allowed the Abbé Bernis, then at the head of affairs, to accept the offers of Kaunitz and to conclude the First Treaty of Versailles. The terms of the treaty were very general.

France and  
Austria  
conclude  
First  
Treaty  
of Ver-  
sailles,  
May, 1756

1. Each Power engaged to defend each other's possessions in Europe, though France did not undertake to aid in the recovery of Silesia.

2. Austria promised to assist France if she were attacked by any ally of England on the continent, though she expressly declared herself neutral in the actual war between France and England in the New World.

Meanwhile, Elizabeth of Russia, declaring that her agreement with England had been made to defend Hanover from Frederick, and that it had been annulled by the Convention of Westminster, now offered Maria Theresa to attack Frederick with

Elizabeth  
of Russia  
joins  
Austria,  
April, 1756

80,000 men, and promised not to make peace till Silesia was regained.

Frederick  
II. enters  
Saxony  
without  
declaration  
of war,  
Aug. 29,  
1756

Frederick the Great became convinced that his destruction was being prepared. He, therefore, massed his troops on the frontier. When Austria did the same, he demanded an explanation, and on receiving an equivocal answer, first asked the Elector of Saxony for leave to march through his territory, then proceeded to occupy it, and insisted that the Elector should join him. "Good God," said the Saxon envoy, "such conduct is without example." "I think not," answered Frederick; "but even if that were so, are you not aware that I pride myself on being original?" And when his minister Podewils advised him to refrain from so rash a step, he contemptuously dismissed him with an "Adieu, monsieur de la timide politique". Augustus of Saxony, contrary to expectation, refused to comply and retired to the fortresses of Pirna and Königstein, which stand on the borders of Saxony where the Elbe forces its way through the Bohemian mountains, in the country now called Saxon Switzerland.

Indecisive  
battle of  
Lobositz;  
Saxony  
occupied  
(Oct. 11)

When, however, the Austrians under Marshal Browne advanced to the relief of the Elector, Frederick masked the fortresses and met him with half his army at Lobositz. The action, though indecisive, forced Browne to retire and the Elector was obliged to capitulate. He betook himself to Warsaw, his Polish capital, while his army was compelled to join the Prussians.

In the *Mémoire raisonnée*, which Frederick subsequently published, he attempted to justify his conduct in thus invading a country without declaration of war. Unfortunately, the Menzel documents do not prove that Saxony had actually made an alliance with Austria against him. The policy of the Saxon minister, Count Brühl, may be described as one of "I dare not waiting on I would". He rejoiced at the prospect of a coalition against Prussia; he had listened to the proposals of Austria, and when an opportunity offered he probably would have joined the coalition. But he had done no more, and it has been well said that, if we remember the usual methods of diplomacy, most Powers would, on the ground adduced by Frederick, be justified at any moment in forcibly entering their neighbour's country. Frederick, however, cared little for the opinion of Europe. The real question for him was the practical advantage to be gained. He had learnt by the experience of the late war the danger of having Saxony as an enemy, and the importance of that country as a basis of operations. Nevertheless, it may be questioned whether it would not have been better to have moved on Silesia itself. The Saxon business delayed his operations for more than a month, and gave Austria time to prepare. Whatever may be the decision of military experts, it cannot be doubted that in other ways Frederick's conduct increased his difficulties. Although, as he said with truth, his action had been in self-defence and not with any aggressive aim,



his methods exposed him to the charge of being a thoroughly untrustworthy and dangerous man, who must be crushed.

The Diet  
declares  
war on  
Frederick,  
Jan. 1757

In January, 1757, the Imperial Diet declared war against him as a disturber of the public peace. In the same month the Tzarina Elizabeth, by the Convention of St. Petersburg, undertook, in return for payment, to aid Austria in regaining Silesia and in partitioning Prussia; and, finally, in May, 1757, just one year after the first Treaty of Versailles, France signed a second treaty, by which—

Second  
Treaty of  
Versailles,  
May, 1757

1. France was to continue the war till Silesia had been gained and Prussia partitioned, "in order that she might no longer disturb the public tranquillity".

2. On the acquisition of Silesia, Austria was to cede Mons, Ostend, and other districts in the Netherlands to France, and to give the remainder to Don Philip, the son-in-law of Louis XV., in return for Parma and Placentia, which were to go to Austria, as well as the reversion of the Netherlands, in the event of Don Philip leaving no children.

Thus Kaunitz had gained his end, and had completely revolutionised the political alliances of Europe. England, the traditional ally of Austria, had become her enemy, and France, her traditional enemy, had become her friend.

Policy of  
the treaty  
discussed

That France had made a great mistake has generally been assumed. Yet it is difficult to see what alternative she had. It has been argued that she should not have interfered in the European contest at all, but have devoted herself to the struggle with England for the command of the

sea, and for the possession of India and America. It is true that Austria could not help her in this struggle, and that by engaging in Austria's quarrel she divided her aims, and put a double strain on her resources.

Yet, apart from the question whether France was ever likely to become a great colonising Power, a question much debated, it may be doubted whether, if she had confined herself to the struggle with England, she would have been successful. She had only sixty-three ships of the line, and, even had she secured the Spanish Alliance at first, which she failed to do, the united fleets would only have amounted to 109 ships, while England had 130. A country that starts on a naval war at such a disadvantage has the greatest difficulty in ever gaining the supremacy. A navy cannot be made in a day; and once the enemy has obtained the superiority, and with it the command of the sea, any new ships are sure to be destroyed as soon as they venture out of harbour, and before they have had time to practise their crews. The French navy had been neglected of late, and France was now to pay the penalty. The command of the sea once gone, the loss of Canada and of India was inevitable; and yet, that France should abandon her possessions without a struggle could scarcely be expected.

It would therefore seem that her real mistake was, that, in the Second Treaty of Versailles she did not ask enough in return for her alliance, so

that, in the event of success, Austria would reap all the advantage. Had she demanded a larger share of the Netherlands, Austria would, in all probability, have complied, and England might not have been able to prevent it. It was certainly absurd that the chief return for the enormous sacrifices France was asked to make was the establishment of the Spanish Don Philip in the Netherlands, especially when his brother, the King of Spain, declined to give his aid.

Indeed, it might be argued that the true alternative for France was to have concentrated her whole attention on the European struggle. She never wished to rule India. Many in France thought the colonies themselves scarcely worth the expense; and as she was doomed to fail on the sea, her better course would have been to come to terms with England, which would certainly have been quite possible, without the loss of Louisiana or Canada, and to have thrown herself resolutely on the side of Austria.

Later events have shown that the rise of Prussia has been the great danger of France. There was much in Kaunitz's argument that Prussia was the real enemy, not only of Austria, but of France; and that, under the new circumstances, they were the true allies. Had France thrown her whole energy into that war, it is hardly conceivable that Prussia could have escaped partition, and she might never have risen again.

France had, however, decided to carry on the war in both hemispheres. Failure would be disastrous,

and the war once undertaken should have been pressed with the greatest vigour. Yet this was out of the question so long as the Government was the victim of the whims and the personal dislikes of the - frivolous yet ambitious mistress of a sensual and feeble King.

For Austria, indeed, Kaunitz seemed to have made a brilliant stroke, and the ruin of the arch-enemy Frederick appeared inevitable; yet, as events proved, Kaunitz had only gained a useless ally in France, and made an abiding enemy of Prussia.

In the war which became general in 1757 all the Powers of Europe were engaged, except Holland, Spain and Sardinia. Holland did not feel herself interested enough to interfere. In Spain, Ferdinand VI. was influenced by jealousy of his half-brother, Don Philip, and Charles Emanuel of Sardinia, now that Habsburg and Bourbon were in alliance, could no longer play off one against the other, and therefore had nothing to gain by intervening.

The struggle, therefore, falls into two divisions: the contest between England and France for supremacy at sea, in India and in North America, and that on the Continent. These are only very indirectly connected and may be treated separately.

The war on the Continent was confined to the East of the Rhine and centres round Frederick himself. To the surprise of his opponents, he took the initiative, and advancing against the Austrians, who were holding Prague, he was able, by the superior efficiency of his troops in the matter of tactics, to

Powers engaged in the Seven Years' War

Frederick wins the battle of Prague, May, 1757

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But is  
defeated at  
Kolin,  
June 18,  
1757

outmanœuvre Prince Charles of Lorraine, the Emperor's brother, on the battlefield, to defeat him, and to blockade him in Prague. Here, however, his success ended for the time. Marshal Daun, waiting till he had a sufficient force, marched from the East to the relief of the beleaguered city. Frederick rashly pursued his offensive tactics, and was overwhelmed by superior numbers at Kolin on the Upper Elbe. Had Charles of Lorraine only shown more energy Frederick would probably have been completely crushed; as it was, he was forced to evacuate Bohemia.

French  
victory at  
Hasten-  
beck and  
Convention  
of Kloster  
Seven,  
July-  
Sept. 1757

Meanwhile, the Duke of Cumberland, son of George II., and his Hanoverian troops were beaten by the French under Marshal d'Estrées at Hastenbeck, and the Duke agreed to the Convention of Kloster Seven, by which his troops were allowed to retreat under promise that they would not serve again for a year, and Hanover was handed over to the French till the conclusion of the war.

Russian  
victory at  
Gross  
Jägers-  
dorf, Aug.  
1757

Nor were matters better in the North. In August the Russian Apraxin won the battle of Gross Jägersdorf on the Pregel and in September the Swedes invaded Pomerania.

The Austrian army under Charles of Lorraine and Daun now advanced into Silesia, while the Imperial army and the French under Soubise, having occupied the Prussian possessions in Westphalia, moved on Saxony.

Reasons for  
failure of  
the allies

Frederick appeared to be doomed. His enemies were closing in on all sides, and to resist them he had

but one army in the field. That he escaped is to be attributed partly to the want of co-operation between the French and the Austrian commanders, partly to the superiority of the Prussian troops, causes which recurred again and again throughout the war. The Prussian army, originally the creation of Frederick's father (*cf.* p. 146), had been perfected by the experience of the late war, and since that time had been carefully looked after by Frederick himself. No luxury was allowed among the officers. The inferior officers, on whom so much depends, thoroughly knew their work and their men. Promotion was according to desert; insubordination was checked with a stern hand; the artillery had been improved, and the cavalry, under Seidlitz, made the most effective in Europe. Moreover, the army was inspired by the masterful personality of Frederick himself, a man who, though not originally a soldier in tastes, had, through the lessons of the late war, become one of the greatest generals, not only of his own, but of all times; and who, since he controlled the Government as well, had never to subordinate his military operations to motives of State policy which were not his own.

Of the armies opposed to the Prussian King, that of the Austrians was by far the most efficient. It had been reorganised during and after the war of the Austrian Succession. Though inferior to the Prussian army in quality, it was much larger, and had it been well led, would have been most formidable. Unfortunately, Prince Charles of Lorraine was in-

capable and timid, and had no claim to command, except that he was brother to the Emperor. Marshal Daun, though a much better general, was far too cautious and slow, and failed in that most necessary gift, the power of following up an advantage gained. Yet the chivalrous spirit of Maria Theresa forbade her to dismiss her loyal, if inefficient, servants. The Russian army proved itself formidable indeed, but its effectiveness was constantly checked, not only by the changeableness of Russian policy, but by the unfortunate custom of retiring at the end of every autumn behind the Vistula, and thus sacrificing the fruits of the summer's campaign. As for the Imperial army, it was really worthless. The contingents were formed of riff-raff. It had no common organisation, nor even a common commissariat, and was feared rather by its friends than by its foes.

The weakness of the French army, like that of Austria, lay not so much in the quality of the rank and file as in the inefficiency of its officers. These, recruited exclusively from the nobility, were brave enough on the battlefield, but were ignorant of their duties and luxurious in camp. Promotion was only to be gained by favour or by purchase, and some were colonels while they were still boys. As a rule the regiments were raised by the colonels themselves, and much speculation was the result. Above all, the commands of the armies were given according to the whims of Madame de Pompadour, and anyone who incurred her enmity was quickly removed. Thus Marshal d'Estrées, who had won the battle of

Hastenbeck, was superseded by the profligate Riche-lieu, and the amiable but incapable Prince de Soubise. If we add to these causes the dismissal of Count d'Argenson from the Ministry of War because he dared to be independent, and the substitution of nonentities who had often purchased their offices, and the squandering of the revenue by misappropriation, bad administration, and even fraud, we shall not be wrong in saying that the secret of French defeats is to be sought in the chamber of Madame de Pompadour.

In the late autumn of 1757, Frederick, having the advantage of the interior position, and safe from the East, owing to the retirement of the Russians into winter quarters, left the Prince of Brunswick-Bevern to hold Breslau against the Austrians, and threw himself on the united Imperial and French army under the command of Soubise at Rossbach, in Saxony. Once more, chiefly owing to his superior tactics and the efficiency of his cavalry and artillery, he won a decisive victory. The Imperial army dispersed, and the French retreated to the Rhine plundering, as was their wont.

He then turned back and attacked the Austrians who, under Charles of Lorraine and Daun, had taken Breslau. Although his forces did not number more than one half of those of the enemy, he defeated them at Leuthen, and regained almost all Silesia except Schweidnitz, which is of importance as commanding the pass from Breslau into Bohemia.

In the following spring, the misfortunes of the

Frederick  
wins battle  
of Ross-  
bach, Nov.  
5, 1757

and the  
battle of  
Leuthen,  
Dec. 5,  
1757



English  
repudiate  
the Con-  
vention of  
Kloster  
Seven, 1758

allies continued. In the first place, the English repudiated the Convention of Kloster Seven. Richelieu, who had made it, had exacted no guarantees. It was nearly as unpopular in France as in England, and according to the principles of international law, a convention before it becomes binding requires the ratification of the Home Governments. The English ministry refused to ratify it. Forthwith, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick drove the French, with their hated leader Richelieu, who was called the Marauder, out of Hanover and across the Rhine.

Frederick, thus relieved from all apprehension from the West, and having now taken Schweidnitz, determined to make a bold stroke on Olmutz in Moravia. If he could take that important fortress and secure the valley of the March, he would threaten Vienna itself. He had twice attempted the same move during the war of the Austrian Succession, and now, as before, he did not succeed. Indeed, when we remember that Daun was behind him in Bohemia, and that the Russians were again advancing into Silesia, his move must be held to have been over-rash. Finding that his communications were threatened by Marshal Daun, he was forced to retreat through Bohemia, a movement which he carried out with masterly success in the presence of superior forces. Then, passing into Silesia, he dashed against the Russians, and after a desperate struggle of ten hours he worsted them at Zorndorf, near Custring, on the Oder,

Frederick's  
victory at  
Zorndorf,  
Aug. 25,  
1758

His difficulties were not, however, over. Two Austrian armies were on his track: one under Harrach pressed into Silesia; the other under Daun entered Lusatia, or Saxony east of the Elbe. Frederick turned against the latter. Trusting to the usual slowness of his adversary, he rashly exposed his flank. Daun, contrary to expectation, followed the advice of Marshal Lacy, an Irishman in the service of Maria Theresa, seized the opportunity offered, and once more beat his formidable antagonist at Hochkirch, near Bautzen. However, Daun, as usual, did not follow up his victory, and Frederick was able to drive Harrach from Silesia.

His defeat  
at Hoch-  
kirch,  
Aug. 1758

At the close of the year 1758, Frederick had on the whole the advantage over his enemies. His own dominions were intact; he still held most of Saxony, and the French had been driven across the Rhine. He had won four pitched battles, and lost only two, or three if we include Gross Jägerndorf, where he was not personally present. Yet time was telling against him. His resources were well-nigh exhausted, and English subsidies were beginning to fail. Although his artillery was still excellent, especially his horse artillery, which he was the first to introduce into European warfare, he could only put 150,000 men into the field against 300,000. His veterans had been decimated, and his troops were many of them raw recruits. His adversaries had begun to adopt his tactics, and at Hochkirch had actually taken the offensive. From this time forward, therefore, he was forced to act on the defensive, and

there were evident signs that he could not carry on the unequal contest much longer.

Choiseul  
succeeds  
the Abbé  
Bernis,  
Dec. 1758

Moreover, the Abbé Bernis, the negotiator of the Treaty of Versailles, had been dismissed because he now saw the necessity of peace, and had been succeeded by the Duke of Choiseul, a far more able and independent man, and France under his leadership was likely to take a more active part.

The year 1759, therefore, opened gloomily enough. In the summer Frederick had once more to meet a combined attack from the Austrians and the Russians.

Frederick's  
defeat at  
Küners-  
dorf, Aug.  
1759

Although in the battle which followed at Künersdorf, near Frankfort on the Oder, against the Russians who were strengthened by an Austrian contingent, the dash of the Prussians at first carried all before them, they failed in their attack on the last entrenchment, and beaten down by numbers, which were as usual two to one, suffered a severe repulse, mainly owing to the Austrian cavalry. Had Soltikoff, the Russian general, only pursued his advantage, Frederick must have been caught between him and Daun and overwhelmed. But Soltikoff, declaring that it was now the turn of the Austrians, desisted, and in October retired to the Vistula. As it was, Daun was able to occupy Saxony and to force Dresden and Torgau on the Elbe to capitulate.

Successes  
of the Eng-  
lish at  
Minden  
(Aug. 1759),  
Lagos, and  
Quiberon  
(Nov.)

Fortunately the success of the English in the West and on the ocean did something to relieve the gloom. In August, Choiseul's attempt to reconquer Hanover was foiled by the victory of Ferdinand of Brunswick over Contades at Minden, a battle in

which the English for once took a prominent part, while his idea of invading England was effectually prevented by the victory of Boscawen at Lagos as De la Clue was attempting to unite with the Atlantic fleet at Brest, and by the still more decisive defeat of the Brest fleet by Hawke at Quiberon. Henceforth the English were masters of the sea, and blockaded Toulon, Brest and Dunkirk. Indeed the year 1759 was a year of victory for the English. In September, Quebec fell, and with it Canada was practically lost to France. The island of Guadeloupe and Goree in West Africa were taken, while in the following January the battle of Wandewash ended the French supremacy in the Carnatic.

Fall of  
Quebec,  
Sept. 1759;  
and battle  
of Wande-  
wash, Jan.  
1760

Choiseul, having now tried his best, became convinced of the necessity of peace. Yet Maria Theresa, believing in ultimate success, obstinately refused to consider peace, and in March, 1760, concluded a fresh treaty with Elizabeth of Russia, by which East Prussia was promised to Elizabeth in return for further help.

The plan of the allies was to make a concerted attack on Silesia, Brandenburg and Saxony. Laudon, a far more active general than Daun, moved into Silesia and won a victory over one of Frederick's lieutenants at Landshut, but was defeated by the Prussian King himself at Liegnitz. In October the Russians entered Berlin, but on the approach of the Prussians retired across the Oder, and Frederick, displaying his old power of strategy, turned against Daun who had secured nearly all Saxony. Though suffer-

Frederick  
wins battle  
of Liegnitz,  
Aug. 1760

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and Torgau, Nov. 1760

ing great loss he was able by the help of Seidlitz and his cavalry to win a battle at Torgau, which he declared to be the severest in the war. Torgau was the last pitched battle which Frederick ever fought. Fortunately his enemies were nearly as exhausted as himself, and the year 1761 was not marked by any decisive engagement in Germany.

Accession of Charles III., Aug. 1759; and George III., Oct. 1760

Elsewhere, however, two events had occurred which were to lead to important developments. In August, 1759, Don Carlos had succeeded his half-brother, Ferdinand, as King of Spain, and in October, 1760, George III. became King of England. George III. was anxious for peace, and Choiseul was not unwilling to come to terms, even if he had to abandon Maria Theresa. The negotiations, however, broke down because Chatham's terms were too high. The French minister, therefore, turned to Charles III. of Spain. The new King was not, like his half-brother, Ferdinand, a weak, uxorious hypochondriac. As Don Carlos, King of the Two Sicilies, he had shown himself an active reformer. He now transferred his energies to his new kingdom and dreamt of reviving once more the ancient glories of Spain. He therefore accepted the advances of the French, and in an evil moment for his country concluded the third and last of the unfortunate Family Compacts. By this—

The Family Compact, Aug. 1761

1. Each guaranteed each other his possessions as they should be at the peace.

2. Citizens of one country trading in the other were to enjoy the privileges of natives.

3. In a secret article Spain promised to declare war on England if peace were not made by May, 1762.

Had Spain joined France at first, her alliance might have been of some avail. It was now too late. It only postponed the peace, and as far as Spain was concerned led to the loss of some of her colonies to England.

Indirectly, however, the conclusion of the Family Compact affected the war in Germany. Chatham, having received information of the secret article, was eager to declare war on Spain at once. The King refused, and Chatham accordingly resigned. The Marquis of Bute, who succeeded him, was the favourite of the King, and shared his pacific views. Thus France and England began to withdraw from the contest, and if Maria Theresa lost the support of France, this was not so serious as the defection of England from Frederick's side, especially as England would not long continue her subsidies, without which Frederick could not persevere.

When, therefore, late in the autumn of 1761, Austria and Russia began to move again, Frederick was in a desperate strait. East Prussia, part of Pomerania, and Silesia were in their hands. The Russians had at last determined to make their winter quarters in Pomerania, so as to be ready for instant action in the spring. So hopeless was the position that Frederick, who had often contemplated suicide, now wrote many odes in praise of it. But, although he did not, at least from the moral point of view, deserve it, Providence came to his aid and saved him from himself.

On 5th January, 1762, his bitter enemy, the

Resignation of  
Chatham,  
Oct. 1761;  
the Earl  
of Bute

Frederick  
saved by  
death of  
Tzarina  
Elizabeth,  
Jan. 1762

Tzarina Elizabeth passed away, and was succeeded by her nephew, Peter III. The new Tzar, though half-crazy, was a fanatical admirer of the warrior King. He thought himself a soldier. He spent his time in idle mock battles, in which he expended an enormous amount of powder, which might have been used to better effect. Kneeling before the portrait of his hero, he was heard to say: "My brother, together we could conquer the world". Inspired by such sentiments, he made haste to make an alliance with Prussia. His action at once forced the Swedes to make peace, though they had done little in the war.

In the summer of 1762, Peter despatched a body of 20,000 Russians to reinforce the Prussian army, and Frederick had now hopes of driving the Austrians from Silesia.

Unfortunately the crazy Tzar was not allowed to put his boast to the trial. His vagaries had alienated all classes in Russia, while his violence threatened the liberty, if not the life, of his wife. This remarkable character, Catherine, Princess of Anhalt Zerbst, the daughter of a small German ruler, owed her position as Tzarina to Frederick himself, who had negotiated the marriage. Her ambition had been excited by her good fortune, the follies of her husband had aroused her contempt, while his dangerous moods had given her cause to fear him. She accordingly fostered the discontent, and in July, Peter was deposed and shortly afterwards murdered, with Catherine's assent, if not at her instigation.

Peter III.  
deposed,  
July 8,  
1762

Her first aim was to recall the Russian troops, and the hope Austria rose. But Catherine had no intention of rejoining the Austrian Alliance. She preferred to remain neutral, and await further developments. Frederick was, therefore, able to retake Schweidnitz in October, while Prince Henry of Prussia defeated the Imperial army at Freiburg, and Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick was also successful in Western Germany against the French, who here, in the autumn of 1762, conducted an ignominious campaign, the last which they were to fight before the wars of the French Revolution.

Continued  
successes  
of Fred-  
erick

Nor was France more successful in her struggle with England. Complete masters of the sea, the English had been rapidly reducing the French and Spanish islands. It was evident that, if France and Spain were to retain any, they must treat for peace. Fortunately, Chatham was no longer in power, and George III. and his new minister, Bute, were willing to come to terms. Accordingly negotiations had been opened in September, 1762, which, in November, led to the signing of the preliminaries of peace.

Successes  
of England  
at sea

The original cause of the war having thus been settled between them, neither England nor France were much interested in the Continental struggle; and Maria Theresa, left practically single-handed, became at last convinced that she must forgo her desire to revenge herself on the Prussian King. Even her demands that she should retain Glatz and some of the Prussian Rhenish provinces, and



Peace of  
Huberts-  
burg, and  
of Paris,  
Feb. 1763

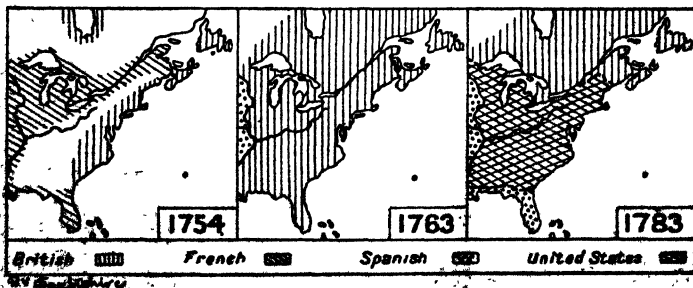
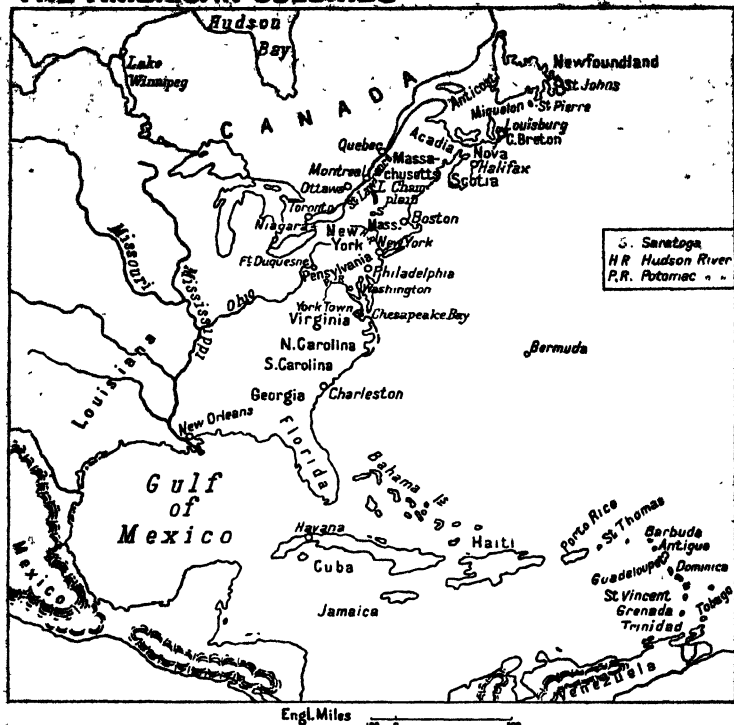
that Saxony should be compensated for her sufferings during the war, were contemptuously rejected by Frederick. "Not a foot of land, and no compensation to Saxony; not a village, not a penny." These were his terms, which were finally accepted at Hubertsburg, in Saxony.

So far as Europe was concerned, therefore, that peace made no alteration in distribution of territory. "A million of men had perished, and yet not a hamlet had changed its ruler." Nevertheless, the indirect results were far-reaching.

The kingdom of Prussia had finally established herself as one of the five great Powers, and henceforth disputed with Austria the leadership in Germany. She had, indeed, suffered severely. Her population was decimated, her trade ruined. There were scarce horses enough to plough the land, or enough corn for seed. But the King had escaped debt, and had even money enough in his coffers for another campaign. He now improved his finances, introduced the system of excise—which, however, caused some discontent—and used his great gifts as an administrator so effectively that in seven years all traces of the war had nearly disappeared. From this time forward he abandons the rôle of the warrior, becomes the advocate of peace, especially within the empire, and when he wishes for aggrandisement, seeks to attain his end by diplomacy.

Austria, indeed, had suffered nearly as much as Prussia in a material point of view. She had,

# THE AMERICAN COLONIES



besides, lost credit, and the great scheme of Kaunitz had conspicuously failed.

The position of England, so far as Europe is concerned, was not improved. Frederick was deeply angered at the way she had left him in the lurch in 1761, at the most serious crisis of his fortunes, and scarce consented to continue diplomatic relations. When, therefore, some twenty years later, England was engaged in her great struggle with her American colonies, she not only found France on the side of her rebellious colonists, but had no ally in Europe whom she could use against her. If, however, we turn to the immediate results of the war itself, the gains of England in India and America were great.

Peace  
of Paris,  
Feb. 1763

By the Peace of Paris, which was signed at nearly the same moment between England and France and Spain—

1. France ceded Canada, the whole of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton in the north, and the following West Indian islands : Grenada, Tobago, Dominica and St. Vincent, as well as Senegal, on the west coast of Africa.

2. The French settlements in India were restored, but no fortifications were to be permitted.

3. Spain ceded Florida to England, but in return received Louisiana from France, which Louis XV., with somewhat misplaced generosity, insisted on giving as a proof of his gratitude to his unfortunate ally.

The Seven Years' War may thus be said to have decided that England, and not France, was to be the first colonial Power; that North America was to

belong to the Anglo-Saxon race; and that England was to be the ruler of India.

It is generally held that the reason why France was beaten in this great contest was that she had imperative interests in Europe which she could not, or would not, neglect; that while her energies were thus divided, England, less concerned in these questions, could devote herself almost exclusively to the sea, to India and to America, while, by subsidising Frederick, she could keep France employed, and so "win America in Germany".

Causes of  
the suc-  
cess of  
England in  
America  
and India

The soundness of this contention has already been questioned (*cf.* p. 179). It was there shown that at the opening of the struggle the navy of France was distinctly inferior to that of England, and the difficulty of recovering that supremacy during the course of a naval war was demonstrated. It only therefore remains for us to note how completely the fortunes of the struggle were dominated by the control of the sea. For here it may be observed that, interesting though the questions may be, whether the French had the desire, or the capacity, to become a great colonising people, and what the future of these colonies and dependencies might have been if they had not been conquered by England; or again, whether the English or French in America would have won if they had been left alone by the mother country—all these are but the "might-have-beens" of history. The important fact for us is, that England did win these dependencies

by war, and that the success of that war depended upon the sea.

Position of  
France at  
opening of  
the war

In America, then, France started with this advantage.<sup>1</sup> She had been the first to establish forts in the disputed territory; she had been most successful in gaining the alliance of the chief Indian tribes; her efforts were united, whereas the thirteen English colonies were wanting in harmony and even in devotion to the common cause, and little was to be expected from the weak and timid Government of the Duke of Newcastle.

Character  
and policy  
of Pitt

But with the final entrance of William Pitt into the ministry (June, 1757) all this was changed. "England," said Frederick the Great, "has long been in child-labour, but has at last produced a man."

The predominant traits of the great statesman Pitt were his extraordinary energy and his distinguished personality, by which he was able to impart that energy to others. Every one it was said left the presence of Pitt a braver man than when he entered it. If we add to this an insight into character, which never failed him, we shall realise that Pitt was one of the best war ministers that this country has ever seen. No sooner was he in power than the incompetent were dismissed; Wolfe was selected for high command, and the war pushed with the greatest energy.

Canada was the main objective of England. It

<sup>1</sup> For relative position of England and France at this time, cf. p. 172.

was not until the English fleet, under Boscawen, had taken Louisbourg, on the island of Cape Breton, that we completely commanded the estuary of the St. Lawrence, and prevented the landing of any further reinforcements from France. To the urgent demand of Montcalm, the French general, the answer henceforth was that it would be useless to send reinforcements, as the English fleet would surely intercept them. Thenceforth, Louisburg became the chief basis of our operations. The English fleet carried Wolfe and his army to the victory on the heights of Abraham, which gave us Quebec, at the cost of Wolfe's life, indeed—a loss which was, however, in some measure balanced by the death of Montcalm as well.

Fall of  
Louisbourg  
July 26,  
1758

Fall of  
Quebec,  
Sept. 13,  
1759

The English now had Louisbourg on one side and Quebec on the other. Vaudreuil, the Governor of Canada, still held out at Montreal, and, taking advantage of a rash attempt of the English army to leave Quebec, had beaten them, and laid siege to the town. But then the English fleet again advanced, and forced Vaudreuil to raise the siege and drop back on Montreal. Finally, the English advanced from Lake Champlain, and Vaudreuil, completely surrounded, was forced to surrender Montreal, and Canada was ours. Meanwhile, in the South, the English command of the sea not only forced Louisiana to surrender, but towards the close of the war allowed us to take the French islands as we chose.

and of  
Montreal,  
Sept. 1760

If we pass to India, we see the same truth illus-

The French  
in India

trated. Indeed, except by some power like Russia, that can attack India from the North, the control of that great continent, if it is to be in the hands of any European Power, must fall to that one who is mistress at sea. Nevertheless it should be remembered that France had thrown away the best chance of an Indian Empire before the Seven Years' War began, and had done this intentionally.

Dupleix,  
1740-1754

The brief history of French predominance in India centres round one man, Dupleix, who, having risen in the service of the French East India Company, was made Governor-General in 1740. It was Dupleix who first laid down the principles shortly after to be adopted by Clive and later founders of our Empire. First, that a sufficiently large and adequately equipped European force could overcome any number of the troops which Indian Princes could put into the field; secondly, that although the native troops were not to be feared when under native command, they could under European discipline and leadership be made most effective; thirdly, that there was no alternative between abandoning the Indian trade altogether and assuming political control, for trade could not live amidst the palace revolutions which were constantly disturbing the numerous native states, both great and small, and amidst the deep-seated corruption which was rife in them.

In vain had Dupleix urged these views both on the Directors of the Company and on the Government. The Company wished for trade and dividends, not for power. "We do not need states, but some ports





for trade, with a territory two or three leagues in extent," wrote the Directors; and they were supported in their views, not only by the Government, but by public opinion. Nor need we be surprised. It was only men who knew India, and who had insight and foresight as well, who saw the matter otherwise, and we may remind ourselves that the opinion of the Directors of our own Company was very much the same, only their hands were forced by a succession of very able and independent Governors-General.

Impressed with these views, the French had at Aix-la-Chapelle surrendered Madras, which their fleet had won in the war. The subsequent brilliant successes of Dupleix, whereby he made himself master of the Carnatic and of the Deccan, decided the course of the succession, guided the councils of his enemies, and gained for the Company the possession of four great provinces (the Southern Circars), were looked upon askance, and his ideas condemned as visionary. When his position was challenged by his great rival Clive, he received but niggard help from home; and when, largely from want of due support, he met with defeat, he was recalled at the suggestion of the English themselves, who declared that his wild ambitions alone prevented the reestablishment of peace. His successor was instructed to share with England the possessions he had acquired, and to enter into a mutual agreement to take no part for the future in the disputes between native Princes (December, 1754), a promise which it was impossible

Dupleix  
recalled,  
Aug. 1754

to keep. Dupleix suffered most cruelly. The large amount of private money which he had expended in the public cause was never repaid, and, nine years later, he died neglected, saved only by private charity from absolute déstitution, in the very year which saw the final overthrow of the French power in India, November, 1763.

At the outbreak of the Seven Years' War, therefore, the position of the French East India Company was highly critical. They still, however, held Chandernagore on the Hoogley above Calcutta, and Pondicherry, eighty miles south of Madras; they still were the practical rulers of the Deccan, where Bussy, Dupleix's best general, was in command, and they still had a good naval base in the Isle of France. But the policy adopted by the French Company had ruined their prestige. With their prestige their trade had declined, while the English Company, under the able administration of Clive, was profiting by French supineness. Shortly after the declaration of war, Clive took Chandernagore, and thus excluded the French from Bengal.

The French Government, when too late, attempted to do something to undo the past, and despatched a new force which landed in India in September, 1757. But any chance of success, which now was small, was destroyed by the conduct of the Government. They did not send the right kind of man, they refused to learn by experience, and the expedition was not properly supported, especially by sea.

The Count de Lally Tollendal, son of an old

Position of  
French E.I.  
Company  
in 1756

Count de  
Lally  
Tollendal  
sent to  
India,  
Sept. 1757

His policy  
and char-  
acter

Jacobite exile, who had taken service in the French army, was very ill-fitted for his task, except for his hatred of England. Although a good soldier, a man of honour and integrity, he was suspicious, bad-tempered and utterly deficient in tact. Ignorant of Indian ways, he soon succeeded in alienating, not only the natives themselves, but his own subordinates, Bussy included, more especially by his well-meaning though ill-timed attempts to do away with the system of corruption which was too prevalent and deep-seated to be cured in the midst of a struggle for existence. The policy dictated to him in his instructions, of which he himself approved, was to expel the English from the Carnatic, so that the French Company might devote itself to trade undisturbed by foreign rivals; to withdraw French troops from the Deccan; and to enter into no alliances with native rulers which interfered with the peaceful pursuit of commerce. The last instruction had been adopted in the agreement made in 1754. It had not, however, been kept by the English, and without such alliances the French had little chance of prospering. Nor did the new commander receive adequate support, as we have said.

Lally takes  
Fort St.  
David,  
June, 1758

His first effort was, indeed, successful. In June, 1758, Fort St. David, near Pondicherry, was taken.

Bussy re-  
called from  
the Deccan

Immediately afterwards the recall of Bussy from the Deccan was followed, as Bussy predicted, by Salabut, who then ruled as Sabahdar, calling in the English. Clive at once seized the opportunity, and the French influence was destroyed in that province. Obstinate

refusing to seek for native support, Lally's hopes of driving out the English from the Carnatic were soon dispelled. In sore need of funds, he attempted to recover the payment of a sum of money owed to the Company by the Rajah of Tanjore. The demand was refused, and when he tried to extort the payment by force, the expedition failed. His attack on Madras was no more successful. The French Government had indeed despatched a fleet under D'Aché to help him. But the admiral was incompetent, and after an indecisive engagement with the English fleet, he sailed away to the Isle of France. Even then Lally captured part of the town. Had the English not been reinforced the fort itself must have surrendered, but in February, 1759, just when the garrison were at the end of their resources, the English fleet arrived, and Lally had no alternative but to raise the siege.

In the following September, D'Aché again appeared. Though worsted in the battle which ensued with the English fleet under Admiral Pocock, he could still have kept the seas; but, unwilling to risk another engagement, and, as was usual with the French, afraid of the monsoon which usually comes on about that time, he again retired.

Meanwhile Clive was steadily pursuing his course. The native Princes interpreted the French policy of non-intervention as a sign of weakness, and rallied to the side of the more powerful. Finally, the victory of Sir Eyre Coote over Lally at Wandewash, January, 1760, was soon followed by the blockade of

Lally's siege  
of Madras,  
Dec. 1758-  
Feb. 1759

Final re-  
tirement of  
French  
fleet

Battle of  
Wandewash, Jan.  
1760; loss  
of Pondi-  
cherry,  
Jan. 1761

French  
finally  
lose India

Pondicherry by land and by sea, and with the fall of that town in January, 1761. Lally and the French army became prisoners of war, and the Carnatic was lost to the French. By the Peace of Paris in 1763 the town of Pondicherry was restored to the French Company, as well as Chandernagore and some other posts, but they were not to be fortified. The Company obtained what they had asked for—the right to trade; but this was of little value. Its prosperity declined. In 1769 the privilege of trading with the French settlements was opened to all French subjects, and shortly afterwards the French East India Company was dissolved. The Company had been founded by Richelieu, had been reorganised by Colbert, and had for a moment been incorporated in Law's great Mississippi Company. It had been, with the establishment of the colonial power of France, one of the most remarkable achievements of the old monarchy of France, and with that colonial empire it fell, as the French monarchy itself was soon to fall.

## CHAPTER IX

### FIRST PARTITION OF POLAND—GUSTAVUS III. AND THE REVOLUTION OF 1772—CLOSE OF THE REIGN OF LOUIS XV

THE Seven Years' War had hardly closed when the death of Augustus, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, once more attracted the attention of Europe to that ill-fated country. Conditions in Poland had not improved during the reign of the late King. Driven from Saxony during the war, he had taken refuge at Warsaw. But he had neither the desire nor the power to attempt any reform, and the only result of his reign was that Poland fell still more entirely under Russian influence. To increase this influence and to reduce Poland to the condition of a Russian dependency, if not to absorb it, had been for a long time the policy of the Russian Court. Yet Catherine II. was fully aware that such a policy would meet with opposition from Frederick the Great, and probably from Austria. She, therefore, thought it more prudent to act with Prussia for the present. Frederick, on his part, was eager for a Russian alliance. His worst defeats in the late war had been inflicted by Russian troops; it

Death of  
Augustus  
II. of  
Poland,  
Oct. 1763

had been Peter's accession and changes of policy which had saved him; and he feared Russia more than any other Power at the moment. Accordingly, he gladly accepted the advances of Catherine, and agreed to unite with her in supporting the election of her nominee, Stanislas Poniatowski, a Polish noble, and once a favourite of the Tzarina. They further engaged to prevent any reform of the constitution which might strengthen the crown or make it hereditary.

France and Austria also had their candidate, but they were not prepared to support him by force of arms. Moreover, the influence of France had been altogether destroyed by the fatuous policy, long indulged in by Louis XV., especially in Polish affairs, of carrying on a system of secret diplomacy behind his ministers and even his mistresses. This course of action had led to strange absurdities and contradictions, and had not unnaturally disgusted the French party in Poland.

Election of  
Ponia-  
towski,  
Sept. 7,  
1764

Catherine II. and Frederick, therefore, had no difficulty in forcing the election of their candidate on the Polish Diet, partly by show of arms, partly by bribes. When the new King dared attempt some reform of the constitution, more especially the abolition of the absurd rule that any member of the Diet could veto any measure by his one vote, his new masters at once intervened. "It is to your Majesty's interest," said one of Frederick's agents, "that Poland should remain in its present state of anarchy." They then proceeded to take up the cause of the "Dissi-

dents," or dissenters from the orthodox Catholic Church, and demanded that they should be admitted to equal political rights. The demand, cloaked under the pretext of adherence to the enlightened ideas of the age, was really made with the intention of maintaining the anarchy; and, in view of the fact that such equality did not exist elsewhere in Europe, Poland was hardly the country in which to try the experiment.

Nevertheless, the Diet, called in October, 1767, <sup>The Dissi-</sup> was so completely terrorised by the presence of <sup>dents ad-</sup> Russian troops that it had no alternative but to <sup>mitted to</sup> comply. The Dissidents were made eligible to all <sup>political</sup> places in the Diet and the Senate; and at the same <sup>rights,</sup> time it was decided that the Crown should remain <sup>Oct. 1767</sup> elective, and that the constitution should not be reformed. The result, as might have been expected, was the outbreak of civil war, led by the Catholics, <sup>Outbreak</sup> who formed the large majority, and by those who <sup>of civil</sup> saw clearly that their national independence was at <sup>war</sup> stake. The Catholic nobles in the south formed the Confederation of Bar, in Podolia. Their standard was a crucifix, and their watchword "The Virgin Mary," and they obtained secret assistance from the French, who still had hankerings after influence in Polish affairs. Russia at once took up arms; and in pursuing some of the confederates, violated the Turkish frontier in Bessarabia, and burnt the town of Balta.

It happened that the reigning Sultan, Mustapha <sup>The Turks</sup> III., was a man of some energy and of warlike <sup>declare</sup> <sup>war, Oct.</sup> <sup>1768</sup>



tendencies. He dreaded the increase of Russian influence in Poland, and, incited by the French minister, Choiseul, now embraced the cause of the confederates and declared war (October, 1768). Catherine II. eagerly accepted the challenge. In the campaign which ensued, in the following year, Azof, which had once been in the hands of Peter the Great, was again occupied; the Turks were driven from Moldavia and Wallachia; Bucharest was seized, and the Russians seemed likely to cross the Danube.

Meanwhile, Catherine sent a fleet to the Mediterranean, and stirred up the Greeks of the Morea.

A renewed European war now seemed not unlikely. Austria, not unnaturally, viewed the advance of the Russians on the Danube with alarm, while this opportunity of reviving her influence in Poland might even lead France to take an active part on the side of her ally. On the other hand, Frederick was bound by treaty to assist Russia.

Interviews  
between  
Frederick  
and Joseph,  
Aug. 1769,  
Sept. 1770

Frederick himself had had enough of war, but he saw, in these European complications, an opportunity for fishing in troubled waters and furthering his own interests. His conduct is a most masterly piece of diplomatic intrigue. He first approached Austria. Fortunately he had not to deal with Maria Theresa, but with her son, Joseph II., who since the death of his father had become joint ruler with the Empress, 1765, while Kaunitz did not share her feelings of personal animosity against the robber of Silesia. He flattered the old diplomat by praising his State

paper, the young man by prophesying for him a great future. He disquieted Joseph on the question of Russian advance, and it was probably due to his suggestion that Austria, in July, 1771, made a secret treaty with Turkey. He then turned to Catherine. He warned her that Austria would, in all probability resist any further attack on Turkey, and that, exhausted as his country was, he could not give her any material assistance. Finally, he suggested that the three Powers should come to terms over the Turkish question, and take their compensation in Poland.

Catherine would no doubt have preferred to continue the Turkish war, while she gradually prepared the way for the complete absorption of Poland. But she was not prepared to face the danger of war with Austria, and after some hesitation, she complied with Frederick's suggestion. The Treaty of St. Petersburg declared that to put an end to the anarchy in Poland and to satisfy their legal claims, the three Powers decided to annex the following portions of Poland :—

Treaty of  
St. Peters-  
burg, Aug.  
1772

1. Russia was to take all the country which lay east of the Dwina and the Dnieper.
2. The share of Prussia was to be Polish, or Western Prussia, with the exception of the towns of Danzig and Thorn, and part of Great Poland.
3. To Austria was given most of Red Russia, Galicia, part of Podolia, and the city of Cracow.

The Polish Diet had no alternative but to submit, and Poland lost about one-third of its territory.

The partition of Poland is one of the most shame-

less acts of an age that was not over-scrupulous. It might possibly have been justified on the grounds that the anarchy in the country formed a constant menace to its neighbours, if Russia and Prussia had not designedly fostered the anarchy and opposed any reform.

It would be unfair to accuse Frederick of having first originated the idea of the partition, for it had often been mooted before. Nevertheless, he first made it a practical question, and he throughout behaved as the Mephistopheles of the plot. His desire to unite the duchy of East Prussia with the rest of his dominions can scarcely be wondered at, but this does not justify the methods he adopted, and nothing can exceed the cynicism of his correspondence throughout the affair. The true instinct of Maria Theresa condemned the whole business, yet she allowed herself to be persuaded, and thus exposed herself to the gibe of the man she had condemned as a dishonest robber. "She wept indeed," he said, "but she took. The Empress Catherine and I are brigands, but how did that pious lady arrange the matter with her confessor?"

If we look to the material benefits, Prussia no doubt gained most, yet by the first and subsequent partitions she lost the protection against Russia, which a strong buffer state would have given. It is difficult to see how Austria was strengthened by the acquisition of territory outside her natural frontiers, or the increasing of her non-German population by the addition of a turbulent Slav people. Finally, Catherine would have been wiser if she had refused

all ideas of partition, and had worked for a united and a reformed Poland under Russian influence, which some day might have been absorbed. Russian Poland has ever since been one of the most disaffected parts of Europe, and to-day is one of the serious problems of the Russian Government.

The partition of Poland did not put a stop to the Turkish war. Austria, having received her price, ceased protesting for a time and then took her own measures. The Russian advance was, however, for a time arrested, not only by Turkish successes, but by a formidable revolt which broke out among the Cossacks of the Don, a revolt which was chiefly confined to the serfs and was as much against the nobles as against the Government. Both Austria and Prussia took advantage of the difficulties of Catherine to "round off" their acquisitions in Poland by the seizure of some small districts, while Austria occupied the Bukovina on the north-west frontier of Moldavia. The revolt was put down before the end of the year 1773, and in July, 1774, the new Sultan, Abdul Hamid, was fain to accede to the Treaty of Kütchuk Kainardji, in Bessarabia.

Treaty of  
Kütchuk  
Kainardji,  
July 19,  
1774

1. Russia retained Azof and the coast of the Black Sea as far as the river Bug.

2. Wallachia and Moldavia and the Greek islands were restored to the Porte, but with stipulations as to their being better governed.

3. Russia obtained the right of free navigation for her merchant ships in Turkish waters.

4. The Christians in Constantinople to be under the protection of Russia.

Thus Russia had at last definitely set her foot on the shores of the Black Sea, while her right of interference in the affairs of Wallachia and Moldavia, and of acting as protector of the Christians in Constantinople, were hereafter to be made an excuse for further claims. Henceforth Russia stands in the somewhat equivocal position of a liberator of the Christian subjects of the Porte, and a destroyer of the independence and liberties of the Christian Polish people.

Proposed  
partition  
of Sweden  
foiled by  
Gustavus  
III

The policy of Catherine and of Frederick the Great with regard to Poland cannot be excused on the ground of the exceptional character of that country which necessitated their interference, since they had adopted an exactly similar line of conduct with regard to Sweden. Afraid lest a restoration of the power of the Crown in that country might endanger their designs, they had, in 1764 and again in 1769, united in a secret agreement with Denmark to oppose any change of the constitution, and to consider any attempt to restore the unlimited power of the Crown as a sufficient pretext for a war, in which Russia should claim Finland, Prussia Swedish Pomerania, while Denmark might hold any conquests on the Norwegian frontier which she might make. Frederick himself characteristically warned his sister, who was then Queen of Sweden, that in these matters family affection would have to give way to political interests.

The Swed-  
ish coup  
*d'état*.  
Aug. 1772

Fortunately the old intriguer could not prevent some of his more worthy characteristics from re-appearing in his nephew, Gustavus III., who by his

ability and energy saved his country from the fate that his uncle was preparing for it. This remarkable young man dreamt of the ancient glories of his country. The history of the last fifty years had shown conclusively the weakness of the aristocratic rule. The factions of the nobles had disgusted many, while their privileges had alienated the support of the peasantry. When therefore Gustavus, a little more than a year and a half after his accession to the throne, carried out a cleverly arranged plot to overthrow the Government, he met with much popular support, and the Diet submissively confirmed the alterations in the constitution which Gustavus proposed, and which restored to the Crown many of the prerogatives of which it had been despoiled.

The triumph of the Swedish King, which occurred in the same month as the partition of Poland, was a great blow to the designs of the three Powers. Russia, and even Denmark, thought of effecting by war what they had failed to do by intrigue. But France, which had supported Gustavus with money for his enterprise, now threatened an alliance with the Swedish King. Frederick was determined not to appeal to arms, and Catherine, still encumbered with the Turkish war, and shortly after with a Cossack revolt, thought it wiser to abandon for the present her designs on Sweden. Gustavus had saved his country, and for a brief period under his vigorous, though somewhat rash direction, Sweden again played a not unimportant part in the affairs of Europe.

Improved  
condition  
of France  
due chiefly  
to Choiseul

The success of Gustavus, and the support he received from France, did something to improve her position in European politics. Although the *coup d'état* in Sweden had been effected after the fall of Choiseul, it had been prepared with his approval. He therefore gained the credit of it, while his purchase of Corsica from Genoa and its annexation (1768) gave France a new naval basis in the Mediterranean. At home his administration was one of the best that France had seen, at all events since the fall of Fleury. Having learnt by the experience of the Seven Years' War the importance of the navy, he devoted himself to its improvement, and with such success that, when he fell, France was once more fit to enter the lists with her formidable antagonist England. This was shortly to be seen in the War of the American Independence. Some salutary reforms were also introduced into the army. Nor were the peaceful interests of the country neglected. Choiseul was the follower of the new school of French economists, who believed that agriculture, manufacture and trade would be more prosperous if freed from Government restraint and left to natural laws. Accordingly free commerce in corn within the country was allowed, and free export so long as the price remained below a certain sum. Some of the French colonies were declared free ports, and private trade with India was permitted. The absurd sumptuary law which forbade the use of calico or cotton fabrics, lest the wool trade should be injured, was revoked. These reforms did not, indeed, meet with universal ap-

proval, and the edict with regard to the free export of corn was reversed in 1770. Nevertheless the movement was in the right direction, and both agriculture and manufacture made considerable strides. Moreover, as long as he was in office, the baneful influence of Madame de Pompadour was restrained.

Choiseul, however, was not a great statesman, nor a great man. He was changeable and superficial. His luxurious and extravagant habits ill-fitted him for grappling with the financial problem, the real cancer of France, and after his fall (December, 1770) the evil was intensified by the reckless policy of the new Comptroller-General, the Abbé Terray. This unprincipled man adopted the policy of the spendthrift. He met current expenses by repudiating or postponing the payment of his debts, a policy which, if it gave momentary relief, only increased the difficulty of borrowing in the future.

Meanwhile the Government adopted two measures, which, though in themselves capable of defence, had a disastrous effect on its stability. The Jesuits were expelled, and the "Parlements" overthrown. The first, though not very eagerly supported by Choiseul, had been acquiesced in by him, the other occurred immediately after his fall.

The expulsion of the Jesuits was not due to any theological controversy, nor was it caused, as it was in Portugal in 1759, by their political intrigues. Nevertheless the actual beginning of the quarrel is illustrative of the change which had come over the society since the days of its original foundation.

Choiseul  
succeeded  
by Duke of  
Aiguillon,  
1770

The expul-  
sion of the  
Jesuits



Of all the works of the Jesuits, none reflects greater credit upon them than their missionary efforts.

As their missions grew in importance, they, perhaps not unnaturally, betook themselves to trade. After all, their missions required funds, and these their trade gave them. And yet this devotion to trade would have shocked their founder, Ignatius Loyola, and there was great danger lest the religious fervour of the missionary should be thereby impaired.

In any case, the jealousy of the merchants is not to be wondered at, and, in consequence of their complaints, the Government ordered Lavalette, the Superior of the mission at Martinique, to refrain from further trade. Unfortunately for the society, Lavalette neglected the injunction. Shortly after, at the commencement of the Seven Years' War, a large consignment of goods was seized by English cruisers. Lavalette had borrowed money on these goods, and when the payment became due, the French merchants, on whom the claim fell and to whom the goods had been consigned, were unable to meet the demand and became bankrupt. The creditors forthwith attempted to recover the debt from the society in France itself. The Jesuits declared that the commercial transactions of Lavalette were none of their business, and declined to accept the responsibility, but lost their case before the Consular Court at Marseilles. The society might have appealed to the Great Council, where they would have been more likely to obtain a favourable verdict. Instead of

that they laid their case before the "Parlement" of Paris.

The step was a fatal one. Not only were the lawyers who composed that body actuated by the usual jealousy of one privileged body for another, but the "Parlement" had long been engaged in attempting to resist the claim of the Jesuits to forbid the sacraments and the right of burial by the Church to all Jansenists. Their judges, therefore, were by no means impartial. The question to be decided was whether the whole society was responsible for debts contracted in trade by a Superior of one of its branches. To help them in their decision, the "Parlement" demanded to see the rules of the society, and having read them, they not only affirmed the judgment of the Consular Court, but declared that many of the regulations of the Jesuits contravened the fundamental principles of Christian society; proceeded to forbid Frenchmen to enter the Order, and declared all schools under its control closed. The decision met with much approval, more especially among the middle classes, with whom the Jesuits had never been popular. Madame de Pompadour and Choiseul both had their reasons for disliking the society, and advised compliance. The weak King, after a vain attempt to prevail upon the Jesuits to modify their rules, more especially with regard to the unlimited powers of their General, a demand which was met by the famous answer, "Sint ut sunt aut non sint,"<sup>1</sup>

Jesuits  
suppressed  
in France,  
1767

<sup>1</sup> "The society shall remain as it is or cease to exist."

bowed before public opinion and suppressed the Order in France, 1767.

Clement  
XIV. abo-  
lishes the  
Jesuits,  
July, 1773

The action of France must not be looked upon as an isolated event. Portugal had given the lead, and the example was shortly followed by most Roman Catholic countries, and though the existing Pope in vain attempted to save the society, his successor, Clement XIV., finally consented to abolish it altogether.<sup>1</sup>

The suppression of the Jesuits is therefore of the greatest significance, not only in France but in Europe. Founded to combat the Reformers in the sixteenth century, they had taken the leading part in restoring the fortunes of the Papacy, and since then had deeply influenced the policy of all the Catholic Powers. Few religious orders have done a greater work, none have met with greater obloquy. The question as to their influence or morality has already been discussed (*cf.* p. 73). Here it must suffice to indicate the importance of their suppression in the history of France. The French Government, since the death of Louis XIV., had not indeed identified itself so closely with the Jesuits as had been the case elsewhere, and in the controversy between the society and the Jansenists, which disturbed the reign of Louis XV., though it generally inclined to the Jesuit cause, had been vacillating. That the Crown should take so extreme a step as to expel the Jesuits, and this chiefly because it dared not or cared not to resist popular clamour, well illustrates the decline of the royal authority, the growing

<sup>1</sup>The society was again restored by Pius VII. in 1814.

strength of public opinion, and of the spirit of change.

The Crown had destroyed one of the old institutions of the country, its next step was to overthrow a still older one, that of the Parlements.<sup>1</sup> The relations between the Government and the "Parlement" of Paris had been more or less strained throughout the réign of Louis XV. It had opposed the financial schemes of Law; it had fought the cause of the Jansenists, and it had just forced the Crown to expel the Jesuits. Many of its members had from time to time been exiled, but had always been restored. It now proceeded to protest against the dishonest financial schemes of the Abbé Terray. Finally, in 1770, it took up the cause of the Provincial "Parlement" of Brittany, which opposed the collection of a tax imposed by the governor, the Duke of Aiguillon, and accused him of tyranny and corruption. The Duke demanded a trial before the "Parlement" of Paris. At this moment he was chosen to succeed Choiseul. The King, therefore, interfered. He forbade the "Parlement" to proceed, since the process involved acts of government over which it had no jurisdiction. He reprimanded it for having at various times interfered in matters outside its province, and "of having put itself beside, and even above, the royal power," and ordered that all joint action between the local "Parlements" and that of Paris should cease. In answer to this royal

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the "Parlements" cf. p. 10.

injunction the "Parlement" of Paris declined to carry on its judicial work, and closed the courts.

It happened that Maupeou, the Chancellor at the time, belonged to an old parliamentary family, and that he had himself once been the President of the "Parlement". Possibly the judges counted on his support and hoped that the struggle would, as often before, end in a compromise. But they had mistaken their man. After a fruitless attempt to obtain the submission of individual members, Maupeou took the "Parlement" at its word. It was declared abolished. The members were deprived of their offices, though with some compensation, and they were exiled to various parts of the country. A like fate overcame the local "Parlements". A new system of courts was established, which were strictly confined to judicial work. The judges were appointed with fixed salaries and the system of purchase was done away with. This bold step met with approval from a few of the most intelligent, and among them Voltaire. It cannot be denied that the whole position and character of the "Parlements" was illogical, and really incompatible with a well-organised Government. They were a strange survival of the past. That justice should be administered by a practically hereditary body was a system unknown elsewhere in Europe at the time. Their claim to approve of royal edicts, that is, to share in the power of legislation, was anomalous. Nor had they always exercised their powers well. The justice they administered was often partial, cruel and

unjust ; witness the case of the unfortunate Huguenot, Calas, who was condemned by the "Parlement" of Toulouse to be broken on the wheel on the charge of having murdered his son because he wished to become a Roman Catholic, a charge which was subsequently declared to be unfounded. Their opposition to the royal edicts had often been wrong, especially on matters which touched the privileges of their members in matters of taxation. That the confusion between the legislative and judicial functions should cease was highly desirable, and the abolition of the system of purchase was a great reform in itself. Something, too, was done to redistribute the areas over which the jurisdiction of the "Parlement" of Paris ran, so that litigants should no longer be forced to come to Paris from distant provinces. Maupeou, indeed, wished to follow up the change with further alterations ; to establish a uniform and simple system of civil and criminal law in the place of the old, which was full of intricacies and contradictions ; and to introduce a more equitable system of procedure. These ideas he was never able to carry out. Nevertheless, the changes he did effect were good in themselves, and might have been successful if they had been followed by a radical reform of the whole government of the country, and by the substitution of a constitutional system in the place of autocratic despotism. But this neither Maupeou nor the King proposed. This exceptional act of authority was accompanied by an assertion of the irresponsibility of the monarch to any one but

God ; words which came ill from the lips of one who used his divine power so badly, and which alienated a public opinion which was already being influenced by the writings of Rousseau and other liberal authors. The Crown had shown that the old institutions were no longer necessary, and people began to ask whether the whole system itself was worth preserving. From this moment the cry for the revival of the States-general was often heard.

On the other hand, the supporters of the monarchy itself were indignant at the attack on a privileged and ancient institution. The new courts were virulently abused. It was difficult to find competent men to fill the vacant seats, and any hope that time would remedy these difficulties was destroyed by Louis' successor. One of the first acts of Louis XVI. was to restore the "Parlements" (1774). Any good results that might have followed were thrown away, and the whole affair only served to weaken still further the royal prestige, which had already fallen sufficiently low.

Death of  
Louis XV.,  
May, 1774

Three years afterwards Louis XV. died a victim to smallpox, and thus closed an inglorious reign of fifty-nine years. His character as a man and as a king was contemptible. He was easy-going, good-natured, and even generous when it cost him little ; but, as is so often the case, this good-nature was really a form of selfishness. The private morality of princes has rarely been high, but there are few kings who have been so fickle in their "amours," while the contradiction between

his shameful life and his professions of religious devotion bring despair to the pious, and, not unnaturally, are made use of by all enemies of religion.

Nor was Louis XV. any better as a king. Timid and afraid of opposition, he either allowed his mistresses to usurp his place, as was the case with Madame de Pompadour, or was in the hands of the minister of the moment. Devoid of courage to oppose them openly, he resorted, as already mentioned, to an absurd system of secret diplomacy behind their backs, which thwarted them at every turn, and if he interfered it was generally to dismiss the minister at the dictation of some mistress or of some court favourite. Hence the weakness and the inconsistencies of French government and diplomacy during his reign, and the disasters of the Seven Years' War, when France lost her position in the Old World and failed to hold her own in the New. No king ever spent so much public money on his mistresses, and that at a time when the country was face to face with bankruptcy.

One would have expected that, under these circumstances, the reign would have closed in gloom. Yet it has been well observed that, on the contrary, the country was full of hope. Two facts explain this apparent contradiction. In spite of the hopeless condition of the public finances, the material prosperity of the people was advancing. Manufactures and trade had increased, and the middle classes were in a much better plight than they had been at the beginning of the century. Meanwhile the advance



of science had shown the possibilities of the future, and the power of man over the material universe; while the new school of writers, led by Rousseau, were preaching the doctrine of the perfectibility of man, and attributing the evils and the misery which assailed him to faults of an artificial civilisation and of a bad government, faults which could easily be cured.

But if this faith in the future was of good augury for the country, it was full of danger to the monarchy and to the privileged orders. The monarchy had lost its popularity, and was no longer considered necessary, as it had been in the days of Louis XIV. The Government itself had destroyed old institutions, the Jesuits and the "Parlements". Why, people began to ask, should not the Government itself be altered? At the same time, the position of the privileged orders was exciting discontent among the middle classes. The privileged orders had ceased to take any effective part in the government of the country. They were no longer feared, while they were hated and viewed with increasing jealousy.

## CHAPTER X

### JOSEPH II.

**O**F all the enlightened despots of the eighteenth century, no one furnishes a more interesting or more instructive example than Joseph II. "I have made Philosophy the legislator of my Empire. Her logical principles shall transform Austria." Inspired with these ideas, Joseph proposed to do away once for all with the infinite variety which was the essential characteristic of the Habsburg dominions; to fuse the different nationalities into one centralised State; to establish a uniform system of justice; and to grant intellectual freedom and religious toleration, while at the same time he overthrew privilege and reduced society to a condition of democratic equality beneath a despotic Crown, devoted to its welfare. The Church should also be freed from the interference of the Pope and subordinated to the civil authority.

His foreign policy was marked by the same thoroughness. Recognising that the Netherlands were of little value, he was willing to abandon them, or use them for the purposes of exchange, while he devoted his attention to the extension of his terri-

tories in other directions. Bavaria added to Austria would form a strong nucleus of German-speaking people. The acquisition of the lands of Venice should unite the Milanese with this centre, and also give him Istria and the Dalmatian coast, and thus secure a strong position on the Upper Adriatic. To these possessions, Montenegro, Herzegovina, Bosnia, and part of Servia, taken from the Turks, should be added. Thereby he would gain a strong footing in the Balkan Peninsula, while the conquest of Widin, Orsova, and part of Wallachia would secure the Lower Danube and perhaps prepare the way for some day holding the mouth of that great river. These views on home and foreign politics were not new. They had often floated before the eyes of Austrian statesmen during the eighteenth century. Prince Eugène had advocated the extension of the Austrian power down the Danube; under Maria Theresa reforms had been effected in the direction of simplicity and unity (*cf.* p. 166). But no one had ever pushed the ideas so far, or conceived the possibility of carrying them out in the space of one lifetime.

Joseph had been acknowledged Emperor on his father's death in 1765, and since then had been co-regent with his mother in Austrian lands. As long, however, as Maria Theresa lived, he was prevented from embarking fully on his internal reforms. The first partition of Poland had been his first venture in foreign politics. Here the gains of Austria had been small compared with those of Russia and of Prussia. Joseph, therefore, eagerly seized the next

opportunity which arose to pursue his aims. In December, 1777, Maximilian Joseph, the last of the Bavarian branch of the Wittelsbach family, died. According to an old agreement, the electorate was to pass to the elder branch which ruled in the Palatinate, then represented by Charles Theodore, who had no children. Joseph had married the daughter of the late Elector of Bavaria, probably with an idea of strengthening his claim. She, however, died of small-pox in 1761. He therefore now advanced claims to most of Bavaria. Charles Theodore, a worthless Prince, who had no mind for anything beyond luxury and sports, acquiesced on condition that the rest of the country should be guaranteed to him, and Joseph marched troops into Bavaria. Success seemed assured. Joseph had, however, forgotten Frederick the Great. The old King had said long ago that Joseph was a young man whom it was necessary to watch. He was not, therefore, unprepared, and forthwith approached Charles of Deux Ponts, nephew and heir of Charles Theodore, who despatched a protest to the Diet, while Frederick moved troops into Bavaria. Austria at once called on France to carry out the terms of the old Treaty of Versailles, and Frederick sought the aid of Catherine II. Fortunately neither was prepared to respond. The French minister Vergennes was already fully occupied in supporting the American colonies in their struggle against England, and pointed out that, by the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, France was only bound to aid Austria

Death of  
Maximilian  
Joseph,  
Elector of  
Bavaria,  
Dec. 1777

to retain her old possessions. He, therefore, offered to mediate, an offer which was followed by Catherine II., and which Joseph dared not decline. At the conference which was held at Teschen in Austrian Silesia—

Conference  
and Peace  
of Teschen,  
March-  
May, 1779

Joseph was granted the Quarter of the Inn, that is the country from Passau, between the Danube, the Inn, and the Salza, some one-sixteenth of Bavaria, while the rest was to pass to Charles Theodore.

By this treaty, then, Joseph only gained a fragment of what he had desired, while the union of the Palatinate with the rest of Bavaria made that electorate more powerful than before. The Peace of Teschen had, however, other important results. Joseph became convinced of the uselessness of the French alliance, and began to look to Catherine of Russia, who had in the late conference for the first time established her claim to act as an arbiter in the politics of Western Europe.

Death of  
Maria  
Theresa,  
Nov. 1780

In the following year Maria Theresa died at the age of sixty-four and after a reign of forty years. Maria Theresa is one of the few sovereigns of the eighteenth century on whose memory it is pleasant to dwell. She had guided her country through a most critical period. Coming to power as an untried young woman of twenty, she had, largely owing to the influence of her personality, saved Austria from dismemberment during the War of the Austrian Succession, and left it unimpaired, save by the loss of Silesia, and strengthened by the reforms she had introduced.

Although superior in ability and in character to her husband, she never showed that she realised his inferiority, and retained her deep affection for him to the last. Though not exactly great, she was a noble character. At the same time, in the obstinate tenacity with which she nursed her desire to recover Silesia, in her enduring hatred of Frederick the Great, in her refusal to dismiss her old, though somewhat incapable, statesmen and generals, and in her real love of making matches for her daughters,<sup>1</sup> we note a certain subordination of policy to sentiment, which is perhaps peculiarly; though not exclusively, a feminine weakness.

Yet, if she had foibles, that is merely to say that she was thoroughly human. If she erred sometimes, she was not dishonest or mean. She objected, though in vain, to the partition of Poland, and to the late Bavarian policy of her son. Though there was no loss of affection between mother and son, her latter years were disturbed by constant differences on State matters, and by fears of the dangers which his rash policy might bring on her country.

By the death of his mother, Joseph became sole ruler of the Austrian dominions, and was free to pursue his schemes. The old minister Kaunitz,

Joseph  
sole ruler  
in Austria

<sup>1</sup> The marriages of her daughters, except that of Christina, the wife of Albert of Saxony, were unfortunate. Caroline, the wife of Ferdinand of Naples, was very unhappy; and Marie Antoinette, wife of the unfortunate Louis XVI., was guillotined during the French Revolution.

always rather a visionary himself, submitted to his masterly will, and confined himself to advice, which was not always followed.

Joseph's  
reforms

Few of Joseph's internal reforms survived him. It will, therefore, suffice if we treat them very lightly. The German lands, including Hungary and the Netherlands, were divided into thirteen "Governments," each with a military commander, and two courts of justice—one for the nobles, the other for the commoners, with an appeal to the Supreme Court at Vienna, and also with an administrative council. These councils were formed of officials nominated by and under the control of the central offices at Vienna, which were left untouched. Each "Government" was divided into circles, and under the circles stood the towns and villages. The meetings of the "Estates," or Diets, became purely formal, or were omitted altogether; from them, however, were elected two representatives as advisers to the "Government" in financial matters.

The Church was placed under State control. No Papal bull was to be admitted without the Emperor's consent. Some bishoprics were suppressed, the revenues of others cut down; the bishops were to be nominated by the Emperor; side altars and emblems, which savoured of superstition, were removed from the churches, and the service books altered by Imperial command. Many monasteries and convents were abolished; those that remained were placed under the authority of the bishop, and devoted to useful works. The Church schools for

secular priests were replaced by State seminaries; and for the laity primary education, compulsory, but free, was enforced. Civil and political rights, as well as freedom of worship, were conceded to members of all religions. A universal tax of 13 per cent. was imposed on all lands in the hands of clergy or laity, noble or peasant, without distinction. Lastly, the position of the serfs was ameliorated; they were allowed to marry without their lord's consent; they were secured in the possession of their land, which they now might sell; and their labour services were to be commuted for fixed money payments.

The unification of the kingdom, the subordination of all provincial or class interests to the welfare of the State, these are the main principles of the reforms.

No one can dispute that the aim of Joseph was a good one, or that many of these changes were in themselves desirable. In their general features they resemble the reforms attempted by every enlightened despot of the age, and they should more especially be compared with those carried out so successfully by Frederick William I. in Prussia (*cf.* p. 146). It is possible to argue that, as in the case of Prussia, Austria was not ready for constitutional representative governments, and that the local "Estates" or Diets were not worth preserving. A statesman, however, has to deal with possibilities. He should remember the strength of selfish interests, of national and class prejudices, of custom hallowed by time, all of which such reforms assailed. He should realise the difficulty of finding men as self-



sacrificing, as industrious, and as intelligent as himself to work the new machinery.

Unfortunately, it was here that Joseph, like many an idealist before him, failed. He had not the gift of realising the feelings of those with whom he had to deal, nor even of securing the confidence of his subordinates. When once convinced of the justice of a measure, no motive of prudence restrained him. Any opposition he treated as if it were a personal matter, and any delay on the part of his subordinates to apathy or to idleness.

No doubt Joseph was influenced by the success which had attended the reforms in Prussia, but he forgot that the circumstances were different. To this day the Habsburgs have not succeeded in Germanising the various nationalities over which they rule, nor in establishing complete unity. Surely, then, the attempt to do this in a lifetime was a dangerous experiment.

The opposition was greatest in the Netherlands and in Hungary. In the Netherlands the privileges, which dated from mediæval times, had been confirmed by charter, had survived the Spanish domination, and had been guaranteed by the Habsburgs when they acquired these provinces at the Peace of Utrecht. As for Hungary, she looked upon herself as an independent nation, only connected with the rest of the Austrian territories through the ruler, who, as her king, had made a personal contract with her. In these two countries, therefore, Joseph affronted not only religious feelings and class preju-

lices, but the spirit of nationality. Since, however, the reforms were not all introduced at the same moment, and discontent takes time to organise itself, Joseph was able to neglect the opposition which was aroused, and to pursue meanwhile his foreign policy.

Joseph entertained two alternative views with regard to the Netherlands—either to knit them more closely with his southern dominions by forming them into one of the thirteen “Governments,” or to exchange them for Bavaria. In any case it would be well to increase their importance, while he freed himself from the irksome burden of the Barrier Treaty.<sup>1</sup> If they were to continue to belong to Austria, she would thus gain; if not, their improved condition would make them a better equivalent for Bavaria. As England was at this time engaged in her struggle with her American colonies, and at war with the Dutch over the question raised by the Armed Neutrality (*cf.* p. 247), Joseph did not expect to be opposed by either of these Powers.

Policy  
towards  
the Nether-  
lands and  
Holland

In November, 1781, therefore, he intimated to the Dutch his intention of abandoning the barrier fortresses. “As France was now the ally of Austria,” he said, “they were no longer needed.”

On the Dutch complying, he extended his demands. He first asked that they should cede Maestricht (May, 1784) and then withdrew this request, on condition that the Scheldt should be declared open, and trade with the East Indies permitted, and in August, 1784, ordered Austrian ships to enter the river. England

<sup>1</sup> *Cf.* p. 69.

had, however, now made peace with her colonies, with Holland, and with France (January, 1783), and the Dutch had therefore their hands free to resist. "They will not fire," Joseph said to Kaunitz, who had warned him of the danger of his high-handed conduct. "Sire, they have fired," was the laconic reply.

Joseph now hoped for the support of Catherine and of France. The former, indeed, wrote on his behalf to the Dutch, but Vergennes, the French foreign minister, anxious to retain the friendship of the Dutch, declined, threatening even to oppose Joseph in arms, while he offered to mediate. Joseph realised that the game was up. He accepted the offer of Vergennes, and by the Treaty of Fontainebleau withdrew his demands on payment of a sum of money which France, anxious for a settlement, provided.

Treaty of  
Fontaine-  
bleau,  
Nov. 1785

Joseph, foiled in this direction, now turned to his second idea, that of exchanging the Netherlands for Bavaria. Charles Theodore was not popular among his new subjects, and as before, in the matter of the Bavarian Succession, was compliant. Catherine of Russia, who had just been supported by Joseph in her annexation of the Crimea (January, 1784) and wished for his alliance against the Turk, favoured the project. Even Vergennes, the French minister, thinking that the Netherlands, in less powerful hands than those of Austria, would fall under French tutelage, acquiesced, on condition that Frederick the Great gave his consent.

Here, however, Joseph was to be once more thwarted by the Prussian King. Frederick had viewed with some dismay the growing friendship between Catherine and Joseph. Since the Seven Years' War he had clung to the Russian alliance. He was now in danger of being isolated in Europe. But he still had influence in Germany, and the acquisition of Bavaria by Austria he was determined to prevent. Accordingly he again stirred up Charles of Deux Ponts, the heir of Theodore, who forthwith declared that he would rather be buried under the ruins of Bavaria than comply. Frederick then turned to the German Princes, who were disturbed at the ambitious schemes of Joseph, and formed with their assistance "The League of the Princes".<sup>1</sup> The objects of the League were declared to be the maintenance of the integrity of the Imperial Constitution, and of the respective States of which it was composed, against the revolutionary policy of the Emperor. As neither Russia nor France would help him with arms, Joseph had no alternative but to withdraw, and to abandon, though with regret, his favourite project.

Some of the smaller members of the League were anxious to seize this opportunity for reorganising and reforming the Empire. But this was distasteful to the more powerful Princes, who feared the loss of their independence, and Germany had to be taught

<sup>1</sup>The chief members of the League were Prussia, Saxony, George III. as Elector of Hanover, Charles of Deux Ponts, the Archbishop of Mayence, and Charles Augustus of Weimar.

"The League of the Princes,"  
July, 1785

Death of  
Frederick  
the Great,  
Aug. 1786

the necessity of greater unity by the agonies of the Napoleonic tyranny. The League, it is true, strengthened the position of Prussia, and, had it lasted, might have given her the leadership of Northern Germany. This was prevented by the death of Frederick himself; and with his death the League fell to pieces.

Frederick has, not unnaturally, gained his chief reputation as a soldier. Yet it is a mistake to look upon him as one who delighted in war. He thought Silesia necessary for the strengthening of his kingdom, he therefore seized it and refused to surrender it. Hence the two long wars which mark his reign, in the latter of which he was acting in self-defence. From that moment he had avoided war. He became the man of peace and the diplomat. At home he devoted himself to the development of his kingdom, while he beguiled his leisure moments with literary productions. For Frederick's verses little can be said, and if his quarrels and reconciliations with Voltaire are amusing, they do not add to the reputation of either. In all other respects Frederick, though not a noble character, well deserves his title of "the Great". As a soldier he had no rival in his day. A moralist may well take exception to the methods of his diplomacy, but of their cleverness there can be no doubt. It is, however, in his whole-hearted devotion to the interests of his subjects that he deserves most praise. He not only made Prussia one of the foremost Powers of Europe, he also left her prosperous. His father had reorganised the Government, and in that direction he had little to

do, but in all his work he displayed those gifts of practical statesmanship which were so conspicuously absent in Joseph II. In one way only did he fail to provide for the future. The fault in the system, established by the Great Elector, Frederick's father, lay in the fact that its successful working depended on the character of the ruler. As long as Frederick lived to control and guide, all went well. But he was followed by weaker kings, and the whole machinery of government fell into confusion. Prussia had yet to undergo a period of humiliation and see her very existence threatened at the hands of Napoleon I., a greater, though not a better man, than Frederick himself.

Frederick William II. was in every way a contrast to his uncle, whom he succeeded. The predominant feature of Frederick's character was common sense; his nephew was a sentimentalist. Frederick had scoffed at religion, yet preserved an outward decency of life; his nephew was a curious mixture of superstition and sensuality. Frederick had never allowed anyone to guide his policy; his successor fell under the influences of mistresses and spiritual advisers. That under these circumstances his policy at home and abroad should have been weak and unstable can cause no wonder. And yet the first venture of the new King in foreign politics met with a certain measure of success.

In the year 1786, the quarrel between the Burgher party and that of the Stadholder in Holland, which had long been smouldering, broke out afresh. The

Character  
of Frederick  
William II

Frederick William II. restores the Stadholder, and forms the Triple Alliance, 1788

Stadholder,<sup>1</sup> William V., was deprived of his office of Captain-General, and still his opponents continued their attack. It had been the traditional policy of the Burgher party to lean on France, and since the war with England (1780-1783), English influence had been undermined by the French minister Vergennes. When, therefore, in June, 1788, the Princess Wilhelmina, wife of the Stadholder and sister of the Prussian King, was seized by the agents of the burghers, Frederick William received the moral support of England in his armed intervention. The Princess was released, and the Stadholder reinstated. France, deprived of the leadership of Vergennes (he had died in February, 1787), and already on the verge of the Revolution, was in no position to interfere, and Frederick William succeeded in forming a Triple Alliance with England and the Stadholder. By this alliance the influence of England in Holland was restored; England and Prussia were once more friends; England was no more isolated in Europe, and a league had been made which promised well for the future. The Prussian King had, however, gained too easy a success. He looked upon himself as the arbiter of Europe, and attempted to play a rôle for which he was not well fitted.

On the death of Frederick, Joseph had thoughts of seeking the alliance of Prussia. "Such an alliance," he said, "would astonish Europe and excite the admiration of our subjects." The help of Prussia might be gained to quell the disturbances

which his reforms had caused, more especially in the Netherlands, and, with Prussia as his ally, he need fear no possible combination against him. But Kaunitz declared the alliance impossible. The Emperor, therefore, listened to the urgent request of Catherine of Russia that he would join her in the Turkish War which had broken out in August, 1787.

The ideas of Catherine were somewhat alarming. Ever since the Peace of Kütchuk Kainardji, she had been intent on her Turkish project. She aimed not only at extending the Russian frontier along the coast of the Black Sea, but also dreamt of forming a Greek empire at Constantinople, which should be conferred on her infant grandson. He had already been christened Constantine; Greek nurses had been provided for him; and medals struck representing the destruction of the mosque at Constantinople by lightning. The realisation of her plan would certainly not be to the interest of Austria, yet a close alliance with Russia would give Joseph a predominant position in Europe and strengthen his hand against his rebellious subjects. Accordingly, after some hesitation, he joined her in the war against the Porte.

The allies were not at first successful. Russia had been taken at a disadvantage by the unexpected conduct of the Turk in first declaring war, and was hampered by the attack of Gustavus of Sweden, who was stirred up by the members of the Triple Alliance. Joseph had not the gifts of a successful general, and,

The Eastern policy of Catherine II

Joseph joins Russia in the Turkish War, Feb. 1788



besides, was seriously out of health. In the autumn of 1789, however, the tide began to turn. Catherine, by rousing Denmark against Gustavus, diverted his attention, and thus was able to send Suwaroff, her best general, to the Turkish war. Joseph retired from the campaign, and left the command in the hands of Loudon, the best of the Austrian veterans; and while Suwaroff pushed down through Wallachia and Moldavia, Loudon beat back the Turks, and laid siege to Belgrade (October, 1789).

Elsewhere fortune was declaring against the Emperor. The revolt in the Netherlands had marched apace. The Austrian troops had been forced to evacuate Brussels, and fall back on the last stronghold, Luxemburg. Hungary was on the point of rising; and Prussia, eager to take advantage of Joseph's difficulties, was thinking of intervening.

Death of  
Joseph II.,  
Feb. 1790

At this moment Joseph passed away. He had returned from the Turkish war a dying man, and since then he had been racked with pain. His last moments were tortured by the conviction of utter failure. "One thought," he said, "oppresses me, that, after all my trouble, I have made but few happy and many ungrateful." He wrote to Leopold, his brother, who was to succeed him, bidding him take immediate steps to close the Turkish war, and pacify his distracted country, and urging him to hurry up from Tuscany, and see him ere he died. But Leopold delayed until too late. Joseph's favourite niece came, indeed, only to die in childbed, partly from the shock; and Kaunitz, though he still

corresponded with his master, could not overcome his superstitious dislike to visit a dying man.

Few deathbeds present a more pathetic picture than that of the Emperor. Death in the moment of success is terrible enough, but death in the midst of failure was Joseph's fate. "Here lies the man who never succeeded in anything he attempted," this was the epitaph which he said should be engraved upon his tomb. The historian of to-day may point out that his work was not wholly useless; that some of his reforms, more especially with regard to the serfs in Austrian lands, survived him; and that, if the rest were premature, many have been carried out successfully since his death. Yet, when all is said, the Emperor's verdict cannot be gainsaid. The fate of this interesting, though unfortunate, personality symbolises the failure of the Enlightened Despot. It shows us how difficult it is for any ruler to understand his people's needs, or to do for them what they had better do themselves. It warns us that reforms will rarely be accepted at a despot's nod which, though good in themselves, do violence to existing interests and deep-rooted prejudices.

Leopold, the brother of Joseph II., who succeeded him, was well fitted for the task entrusted to him. <sup>Leopold II., 1790-1792</sup> As Grand Duke of Tuscany, which Joseph had ceded to him, he had shown himself a capable and enlightened ruler. Though he had none of Joseph's brilliancy, he was a far more prudent man, and had considerable gifts as a statesman. In accordance

with the last injunctions of his brother, he had not much difficulty in conciliating the Hungarians and his Austrian subjects by restoring the Government as it had been at the death of Maria Theresa.

Prussia had now to be dealt with. Frederick William had long been wavering as to the policy he should adopt. His ambassador at the Turkish Court urged a definite alliance with the Turk. Sweden, he declared, would join the League owing to her hostility to Russia. Poland might be roused ; even Holland and England might be induced to join in opposing the Austro-Russian alliance, and a formidable league be thus made. But the Prussian King was unwilling to take so bold a step, and listened instead to the advice of Hertzberg, an old minister of Frederick the Great. Hertzberg advised him to take the part of the honest broker, which his predecessor had played so successfully at the time of the first partition of Poland. The scheme was briefly this. Turkey might be induced to cede all territories north of the Danube to Russia and to Austria, on condition of her other possessions being guaranteed to her. Austria, in return, should restore Galicia to Poland, and Prussia should be rewarded for her mediation by the grant of Danzig and Thorn by Poland. Thus Europe would be pacified, and Prussia would gain the two important towns which she had failed to get at the first partition of Poland.

Of this somewhat fantastical proposal Leopold made short work. Nothing, he declared, would induce him to acquiesce. Rather than that he would make peace

with Turkey at any price, he would surrender part of the Netherlands to France, and with her help reconquer the rest, and then let Prussia look to herself. Frederick William was not the man to face a war in which he was unlikely to find allies. He withdrew his proposal, and promised, at the Treaty of Reichenbach, to vote for Leopold at the coming Imperial election.

Treaty of  
Reichen-  
bach, July  
27, 1790

Having thus disposed of Prussia, Leopold soon recovered his authority in the Netherlands. The insurgents had broken into two factions, an aristocratic and a republican, which were quarrelling. Leopold was therefore able to reoccupy Brussels. England, Holland and Prussia offered their mediation; and the Netherlands were forced to accept the promise of Leopold to cancel all the changes which Joseph had introduced. Finally, Leopold closed the Turkish War by the Peace of Sistovo, and contented himself with the acquisition of Orsova on the Danube. In August, 1791, Catherine had made peace with Gustavus III. The war with Turkey continued somewhat longer. But Catherine was disturbed at the course which the Revolution was taking in France, and wished to have her hands free. Accordingly in January, 1792, she consented to the Treaty of Jassy on condition that the Russian boundary should be extended to the Dniester.

Peace of  
Sistovo,  
Aug. 1791

Treaty of  
Jassy,  
Jan. 1792

Europe was once more at peace, yet three months had scarce elapsed before war broke out between France and Austria, a war which was soon to involve all the Powers of Europe, and which was not finally closed for three and twenty years.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE EVE OF THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

Accession  
of Louis  
XVI.,  
May, 1774

LOUIS XVI. was only twenty years of age when he succeeded his grandfather. In private morals he presents a pleasing contrast to the worthless Louis XV. He was virtuous, honest and well-meaning. Yet his education had been neglected, he had no knowledge of affairs, and he had no natural ability, no initiative, no force of will. He was even deficient in dignity and in presence. In quiet times he might have been an amiable nonentity, but he was utterly unfitted to guide his country at this crisis.

Policy of  
Vergennes,  
1774-1787

Nevertheless, the foreign policy of France, as long as it was directed by Vergennes, was not unsuccessful. The Count of Vergennes, who became Foreign Minister at the accession of Louis XVI., had a good grasp of European affairs, which he had acquired in his long service as a diplomat. We have already noticed his alliance with Gustavus III., and his activity in the matter of the Bavarian succession and exchange (*cf.* pp. 229, 236), all of which raised the reputation of French diplomacy. But it is his policy towards England that deserves the greatest credit.

The revolt of the American colonies, which began in 1775, belongs rather to English than to foreign history; and cannot be dealt with here, except so far as it concerned the rest of Europe, and the foreign relations of England. The view of the situation held by Vergennes displays considerable insight. If the combatants were left to settle the matter by themselves, the success of either would endanger the remaining French and Spanish colonies. It was therefore important to assist the rebels. In this way France would be able to revenge herself on England, and regain some of her colonies lost in the Seven Years' War, while the Americans, under an obligation to France, would not interfere with her colonial expansion. At the same time it would be rash to openly espouse their cause, until it seemed likely to succeed. Vergennes, therefore, at first confined himself to secret support in the way of money and volunteers, and did not join them openly till February, 1778. Even then the condition of his alliance was that the Americans should not make peace till their independence was recognised. He then induced Spain to join him (April, 1779.) To the Americans this assistance was invaluable. Indeed it may be doubted whether without it they would have succeeded. "Not only did it furnish them with men and money, but with a navy, and a navy which, owing to the exertions of Choiseul, was able to meet the English. Once more the importance of the sea was illustrated, and the final capitulation of Lord Cornwallis at York Town would not have occurred had

The War of American Independence, 1775-1783

France openly joins the American colonies, Feb. 1778

Cornwallis capitulates at York Town, Oct. 1781

not the French fleet at that moment held the Chesapeake Bay and cut off all hopes of relief.

Nor did the activity of Vergennes stop there. Spain was induced to attack Gibraltar, though unsuccessfully, and to seize Minorca, and the rest of Europe was encouraged to form the Armed Neutrality. The members of this League demanded that the existing rules of international law with respect to neutral vessels should be altered. First, paper blockades should no longer be acknowledged; that is to say, no belligerent should seize a neutral vessel entering an enemy's port unless it were effectively blockaded by the presence of a ship of war. Secondly, the flag covers the goods; that is, no goods of a belligerent on a neutral vessel should be taken except contraband of war, and contraband should be strictly limited to food supplies and munitions of war. Such an alteration would impair the advantages of the command of the sea, and England, not unnaturally, refused to comply.<sup>1</sup> None of the Powers proceeded to hostilities except Holland, where the quarrel was complicated by other questions. Yet the dispute prevented England from finding any allies, and she was thus left to carry on her desperate struggle alone. In 1783 she submitted to the inevitable, and the American colonies were lost. In the naval war, however, which accompanied the

Treaty of  
Versailles,  
Jan.-Sept.  
1783

<sup>1</sup> England accepted these alterations at the Peace of Paris, 1870, and is now suggesting the abolition of contraband altogether, at the Hague Conference. Many are of opinion that England has acted very foolishly in this.

closing scenes, England was not unsuccessful. The victories of Rodney over the Dutch at St. Eustatius, and over De Grasse off Dominica, 12th April, restored English supremacy at sea. At the Peace of Versailles

she only lost St. Lucia and Tobago in the West Indies, and Senegal in Africa, to France, while ceding West Florida and Minorca to Spain.

The surrender of Minorca weakened England's hold in the Mediterranean; the loss of her American colonies seemed to herald the decline of her colonial power. She was isolated in Europe, while France had gained both materially and in prestige.

If, however, we turn to home affairs, it may be asked whether France had not paid too high a price for her success abroad. The Americans had appealed to the "Rights of Man" in justification of their revolt. Rousseau had already raised that cry in France, and it was now strengthened by the example of her new ally. It is significant that the Marquis de Lafayette, one of the most prominent men in the early days of the French Revolution, had served in America, and thenceforth became a popular hero in France. The alliance of an effete and despotic monarchy with a young and vigorous democracy, which was based on such ideas, was full of danger. The expenses of the war had increased the public debt, and it was pretty certain that unless bankruptcy could be avoided, and reforms instantly taken in hand, the monarchy would fall.

Home  
policy of  
Louis XVI.



It was here that the weakness of Louis XVI. was most fatal.

Turgot,  
Comptroller-  
General,  
1774-1776

He had, indeed, at the beginning of his reign found in Turgot, a Comptroller-General who might have saved the situation. Turgot had been Intendant in the province of Limousin, and, from his experience there, had conceived a well-constructed plan. The remedy for the financial difficulties was not, he said, to be sought for in bankruptcy or repudiation of debt, in the increase of taxes or in loans, but in economy and reform. To effect this, the abuses in the collection of the revenue should be removed and sinecures abolished; the "corvée," or forced labour on the roads, should cease, and the inequality of the "gabelle," or salt tax, remedied.

To meet the deficit which would thus be caused, the privileges of exemption, enjoyed by the nobles, the clergy and others, should be done away with, and a single tax on land should be imposed on all classes according to the value of their land. At the same time, free trade in corn within the country should be once more allowed (*cf.* p. 18), the custom duties lowered and simplified, all guilds declared illegal, and other restraints on the freedom of trade and industry removed. Although Turgot was no believer in popular legislation, and still wished to retain all legislative powers in the hands of the King and his council, he wanted to establish an ascending scale of elected assemblies of the village, the arrondissement or district, the province and the nation. The functions of these assemblies would be as with

our district and county councils, to give information to the central authority and to administer the royal edicts.

The plan of Turgot is no doubt open to objections. His idea of a single tax on land was based on the erroneous theory of the physiocrats, that land alone was the source of wealth. This theory forgets that capital and industry of all kinds are equally productive of wealth. Wealth is anything that has value, and everything has value which satisfies human wants, and is not obtainable without effort. Many things answer men's needs besides those directly produced from land. Thus the industry which spins and weaves the wool or grinds the corn into flour increases wealth, since cloth and flour are more valuable than raw wool and corn. Turgot would therefore have been on sounder ground had he made all forms of wealth equally liable to taxation. Yet it was a great thing to abolish the meaningless, unjust and harmful exemptions which existed, and if the time ever came, as it surely would, when the people would demand a share in legislative power, the plan of Turgot was a move in the right direction. Something would have been done to mitigate the extreme centralisation of the government, and the people would have received meanwhile an education and a discipline. They would have learnt the difficulties of government and the danger of pure theory without the chastening, sobering influence which experience alone can give.

Turgot at all events was not allowed to try his

plan. Like many reformers, he had little tact and no conciliatory gifts. He was dictatorial and impatient of opposition and delay, and his enemies made use of his unpopularity to defeat him. The edict allowing free trade in corn within the kingdom led to grave discontent as it had before. An unfruitful year was followed by high prices in some places. The dealers took advantage of the edict to buy up corn at cheap rates where it was plentiful and to sell it where it was dear, and thus neither producer nor consumer seemed to derive benefit. This was inevitable, but in time competition would have partly cured the evil; and Turgot stood firm. Of the discontent thus caused, the privileged classes made good use, and denounced his other schemes. Unfortunately, Louis XVI. had recalled the "Parlement" of Paris. They too joined in the cry, for they were among the privileged, and refused to register the other edicts. Maurepas, the chief minister, supported the opposition, and the weak King, after much hesitation, dismissed his unpopular Comptroller-General.

Turgot  
dismissed,  
May, 1776

Necker,  
Director of  
Finances,  
Oct. 1776-  
May, 1781

The King now listened to the tempting promises of Necker, a Genevan Protestant and banker. As, however, no Protestant could hold the highest offices of State, Necker was only appointed Director of Finances. Turgot had objected to loans, Necker sought safety in further borrowing. This would give him time to carry out the economies he desired as much as Turgot. Meanwhile, by publishing a balance sheet (*compte rendu*) of the public finances

he hoped to re-establish confidence. There was something to be said for thus courting publicity. The country would at least know the worst, and the privileged classes might be thus induced to abandon their privileges. Necker indeed attempted to show that the financial position was not so bad as was supposed. Further scrutiny, however, proved that many items had been omitted, and that his estimates were fallacious. The publishing of the balance sheet therefore only increased the dismay and deepened the discontent. Necker, finding that he was losing power, demanded to be admitted to the ministry, and on this being refused, resigned. The only result of his administration was the establishment of three Provincial Assemblies somewhat after the plan suggested by Turgot, which lasted until the Revolution, and which he had intended to extend to the whole of France.

After the fall of Necker a feverish period ensued of distracted councils and vacillating policy; the King listening now to the party of reaction, now making some feeble attempt at reform. Under Calonne, who was appointed in 1783, the expenses of government and of court increased, and the ruinous system of loans was again resorted to, until at last Calonne was forced to confess that he could not even pay the interest on the debt. He now fell back on Turgot's ideas, and advised the summoning of a Council of Notables to sanction his proposals. The council, which was for the most part formed of the privileged classes, instead of supporting him, attacked

Calonne,  
1783-87

The Council of  
Notables

his financial policy and forced the King to drive him from office. His successor, Leomény de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, now induced the Notables to accept some of Calonne's proposals, but, as they declined to approve of a general land tax, and demanded the convocation of the States-general, they were dismissed. A final effort was made to obtain the registration of the royal edicts by the "Parlement" of Paris. The "Parlement" refused once more and repeated the demand of the Notables that the States-general should be called. Louis XVI. took them at their word. The "Parlements" of France were declared suppressed, Necker was recalled, and the meeting of the States-general was announced for May 1, 1789. With the opening of that famous assembly, which had never sat since 1614, the French Revolution began.

Necker  
recalled,  
Aug., 1788,  
and States-  
general  
summoned

The En-  
lightened  
Despot  
in theory  
and  
practice

The period which thus closes with the outbreak of the French Revolution may be called the Age of the Enlightened Despot. This theory of government had indeed been heard of in earlier ages, but at no time had it so many exponents. If we omit England, where power, since the Revolution of 1688, had been in the hands of an aristocratic parliament, every country of Europe, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, felt the influence of the idea, either in the person of the ruler himself, or in that of the minister who controlled his policy. It will therefore be helpful if we conclude this volume with a summary of the general motives which underlay the theory, and of the work accomplished by its advo-

cates; and with an enquiry into its necessary limitations, and the causes of its partial failure.

The three main principles which underlay the conception were: (1) the identification of the State with its ruler; (2) the subordination of all private interests to those of the State; (3) the assumption that the interest or advantage of the State was a sufficient justification for every public act. In the foreign policy of the day we find that statesmen no longer concerned themselves much with the legality of the claims made to any piece of territory, but urged rather the imperative necessity of its acquisition to the safety or prosperity of their country. The theory of the balance of power, a theory once advocated in the defence of small States, was now made an excuse for the aggrandisement of the more powerful. The despots sought to attain their ends by the wiles of a dishonest diplomacy, or, if that failed, by an appeal to arms, in which they bade for the alliance of other Powers as selfish as themselves. No king perhaps equalled Frederick the Great in the cynical frankness with which he avowed his motives and his methods, but most statesmen adopted his principles and followed his example. Hence the intricate network of diplomacy; hence the constant alliances and counter-alliances which change with the variety of a kaleidoscope; hence the never-ending wars and hence the acts of spoliation, of which the partition of Poland is, perhaps, the most shameless, but certainly not the only example.

It is, no doubt, true that a worse cause for war

may easily be found than the "imperative interests of a country," but many of the aggressions of the period cannot be justified on these grounds. France, for instance, is still powerful and prosperous, though she no longer holds the basin of the Rhine, nor rules over Spain, as was desired by Louis XIV.; while a reformed Poland need not have stood in the way of the development of Russia and of Austria.

But if there is much to condemn in the foreign policy of the Enlightened Despots, we cannot say that matters in this respect are much better now, and it must be allowed that many of them had done great things for their country. France certainly gained materially from the conquests of Louis XIV., though perhaps at too great a cost.

Prussia could never have been a great Power without the acquisitions of the Great Elector and of the Great Frederick, nor Russia without a door to the West.

If we turn from questions of foreign policy to those at home, there is much truth in the boast that the Enlightened Despot aimed at the welfare of his country, and that the cry, "All for the people" was not wholly false. Prussia owed her rise entirely to her great rulers. Peter the Great may have misconceived the true line on which Russia should develop; Joseph II. was no doubt too hasty in his reforms; yet no one can dispute the sincerity of either of these remarkable men. The aims of these absolute monarchs we have already seen. They wished to destroy the power

of the nobles, and to substitute for the government by the privileged a centralised system, worked chiefly by the middle class, yet under the absolute control of the ruler himself. The energies of this government should then be devoted to the advance of the material and moral conditions of their people. Serfdom and other feudal abuses should be abolished or softened. The undue influence of the Church should be restrained, and a wider toleration of opinion allowed. The laws and judicial procedure should be simplified and made more equitable. Education should be encouraged; and, finally, industry and commerce should be promoted by direct government action.

But good intentions will not alone suffice. The despot must also be wise enough and well-informed enough to realise what are the true interests of his people. His government, it has been said, must be "directed by a will superior alike to majority and minority, to interests and classes. It is to be the intellectual guide of the nation, the promoter of wealth, the teacher of knowledge, the guardian of morality, the mainstay of the ascending movement of man." In the pursuit of this aim the people are to be ruled, not as they wish to be, but as their master thinks they should be. He is to be the arbiter of right and wrong, and no one is to gainsay his will. Even if such a standing miracle may here and there be found, the people will be kept in a state of pupillage, character will be weakened, and the education and discipline, which the practice of self-



government and the play of free opinion alone can give, must inevitably be lost.

But such rulers are rare, at least are not to be secured under a system of hereditary succession.

Nor is this all. The conditions of society are so complex, and its interests so varied, that no one man can master them all, or conduct the details of administration without help. Enemy as he is to all forms of popular self-government, he is obliged to surround himself with councillors and with an elaborate system of boards or departments of administration. As long as the despot is himself capable and well-meaning he may be able to control this huge machine and direct it in the public interest. When, however, as must, sooner or later, inevitably be the case, a less devoted or a weak man succeeds, the machinery is used for bad ends, as was the case in France under Louis XV. ; or is likely to get out of gear and fall into confusion, as was the case in Prussia after the death of Frederick. Moreover, as we have noticed in the case of France and of Russia after the death of Peter the Great, the members of the bureaucracy surround themselves with the privileges of an almost hereditary caste. They become the slaves of custom and of precedent, and the selfish enemies of all reform, while they are often themselves divided by faction and personal rivalries.

Under these influences the despotism ceases to be either reforming or enlightened ; it has long ago alienated the sympathy of the noble classes by the attack made on their privileges, and it now ceases

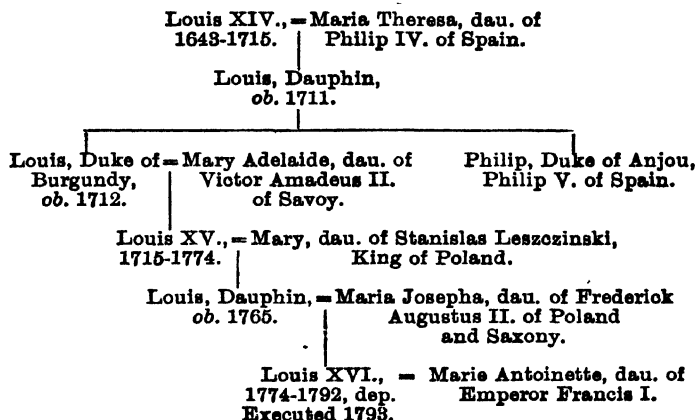
to be popular among those whom it was originally intended to benefit. Such was the fate which threatened, if it had not already overcome, most of the so-called enlightened despotisms at the close of the eighteenth century. In Russia the power of the Tzarina Catherine was still unassailed, but the bureaucracy had already exercised its baneful influence. Austria, shaken to her very foundations by the rash innovations of Joseph II., was indeed recovering herself under the more prudent guidance of Leopold II., but was soon to fall into the hands of weaker rulers. Prussia had lost the controlling mind of Frederick the Great, and was under the feeble and superstitious rule of Frederick William II. In Spain, the capable Charles III. was soon to be succeeded by the worthless Charles IV. The proud monarchy of France, ruined by the carelessness and profligacy of Louis XV., had fallen to pieces in the hands of the vacillating though well-meaning Louis XVI., and the Revolution had begun.

The Enlightened Despot had failed. The future was to show whether governments based on popular representation would do any better.

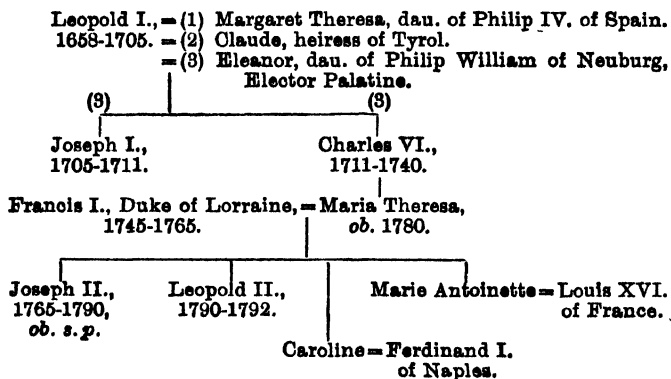


## APPENDIX

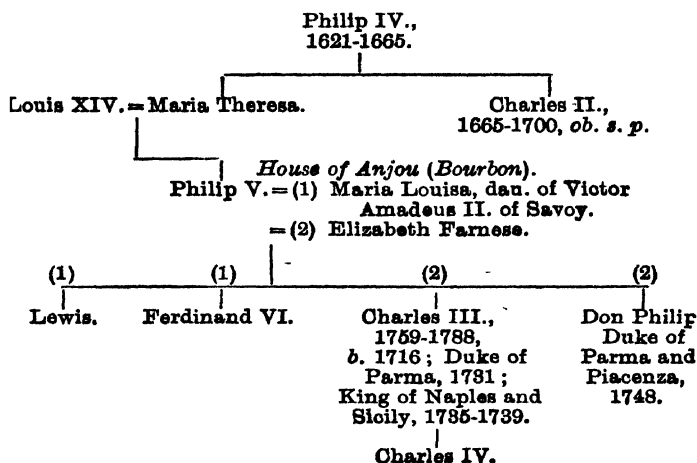
### FRANCE. THE BOURBON KINGS



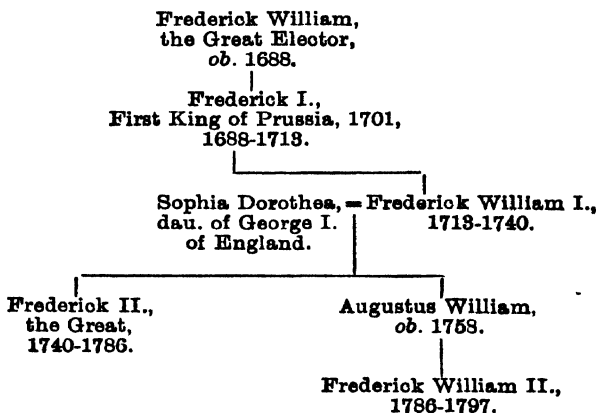
## THE HABSBURGS IN AUSTRIA



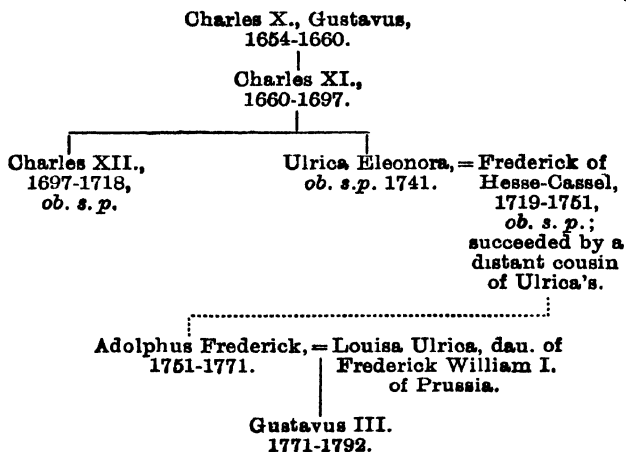
## THE HABSBURGS AND BOURBONS IN SPAIN



# HOHENZOLLERN KINGS OF PRUSSIA

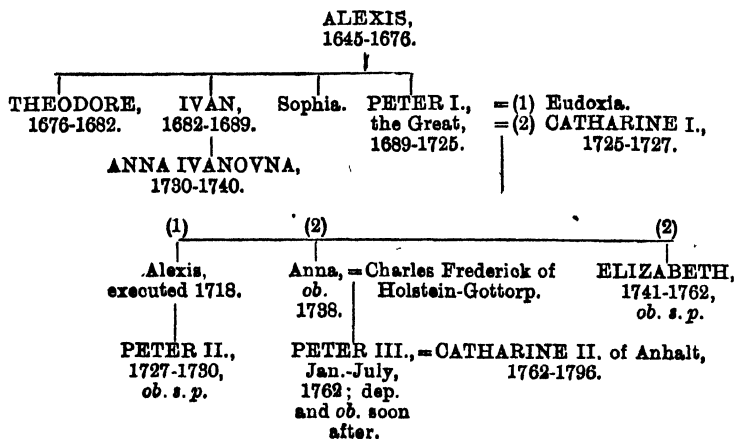


## SWEDEN. HOUSE OF VASA





## RUSSIA. HOUSE OF ROMANOFF



ELECTORS OF SAXONY AND KINGS OF POLAND  
HOUSE OF WETTIN

John George II.,  
1656-1690.

|  
John George III.,  
1690-1691.

|  
Frederick Augustus II.,  
1694-1733;  
King of Poland, 1697-1733.

|  
Frederick Augustus III.,  
1733-1763;  
King of Poland, 1733-1763;  
succeeded by  
Stanislas Poniatowski.

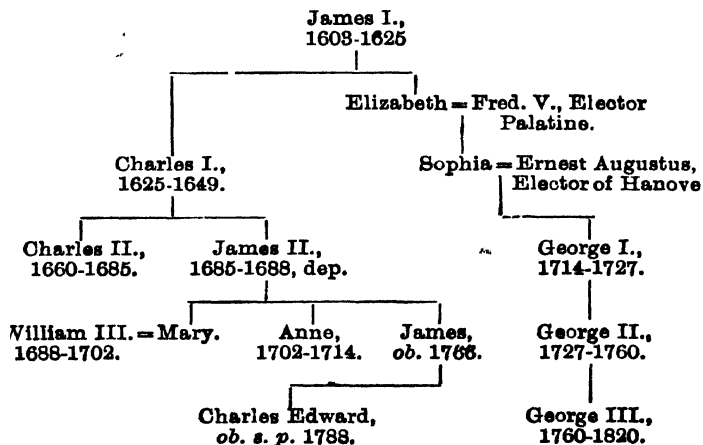
ELECTORS OF BAVARIA. HOUSE OF  
WITTELSBACH

Maximilian Emanuel,  
1679-1726.

|  
Charles Albert,  
1726-1745;  
Emperor 1742, as Charles VII.

|  
Maximilian Joseph,  
1745-1777,  
*ob. s. p.*;  
succeeded by Charles Theodore.  
Elector Palatine.

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